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JULIA ST. HELEN,

A NOVEL.

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JULIA ST. HELEN;

OR,

THE HEIRESS OF ELLISBOROUGH.

A NOVEL:

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Published by SARAH COBBE,

RELICT OF THE REV. RICHARD CHALONER COBBE,

RECTOR OF BRADENHAM IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,

AND CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE EARL OF MOIRA.

VOL. I.

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1800.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE EARL OF MOIRA,

BARON RAWDON,

&c. &c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

I take the liberty of dedicating to your Lordship the following pages, as a small tribute of gratitude for the many acts of friendship and generosity for which myself and family must ever be your debtors—favors doubly enhanced by the *manner* in which they were conferred. The feelings that uniformly regulate your Lordship's conduct will, I am confident, insure my pardon for this freedom, particularly when

I add that it is also with a view of securing a favorable reception to my book, that I venture it to the world under the sanction of a name every way so respectable.

I have the honor to be,

With just esteem,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's much obliged

And grateful servant,

15 *June*, 1800.

SARAH COBBE.

PREFACE.

It is necessary, when introducing the following pages to the public, to explain the particular circumstances which gave into my possession a manuscript, with whose author I have not the good fortune to be acquainted, and to whose family and even name, I am a total stranger. However proud I might be of being considered as capable of producing a work replete with taste, feeling and sentiment, which reflect honor on the head and heart of its author (who, I am informed, has long since paid the debt of nature) yet I conceive it to be incumbent upon me to declare That Julia St. Helen *is not mine*, but has been kindly obtained for me from the deceased author's relatives, through the interference of a friend, and upon the condition that I should publish it by subscription—a condition, which, in times like these, the widowed mother of a numerous family

may find a thousand motives for accepting without hesitation. I am not ashamed to avow that maternal feelings urge me on to exertion, and that they are my sole inducement for obtruding my name on the public. Encouraged by my friends, and assured of their anxious wishes for my success, I will venture to hope that disappointment will not in this instance pursue me.

Julia St. Helen, though avowedly a novel, has, I am confidently assured, many realities blended in her story, and its author never designed it for publication, as may be gathered from the circumstance that it was written three years before those relatives, with whom she resided, were favoured with a view of the manuscript. Happy am I in seizing the only opportunity, which their desire of being *unknown* to the being they have so particularly obliged, affords me, of thus offering them my sincerest acknowledgements, and the grateful sense I shall ever retain of their favor.

SARAH COBBE.

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JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER I.

Julia Thomas to Lady Jane Forester.

MADAM,

I CANNOT bring myself to a quiet submission, under such extraordinary injuries as I have just experienced—injuries, which can be equalled only by the favors you once heaped upon me. I would disdain to ask of any person but Lady Jane the unenviable privilege of appearing as a criminal. It is to plead my innocence before you, Madam, that I seek this, not to make a confession of crimes I abhor. I must be wretched, while your opinion of me is one I do not merit. It is to your

justice, not to your compassion, that I make my appeal; I entreat you to allow me an opportunity of removing every false, unjust and cruel suspicion. You once, Lady Jane, preserved me, a poor, deserted, friendless orphan, from ruin—exert yourself anew to protect me from impending misery. 'Till last night, you reposed an unbounded confidence in my words and actions—you honored me with your friendship, esteem and regard; yet, in one ill-omened moment, you abandon me, without character, to that world, from which you had so benevolently rescued me. For pity's sake! Madam, let your accustomed candor and compassion to the unfortunate prevail so far over your seemingly well-grounded suspicions, as to suffer me to appear before you, and assert my innocence.

When your sister opened the library-door and saw her husband at my feet, myself in tears, and overwhelmed with confusion, she was, I will allow, excusable, in supposing *him* unfaithful, and *me* no longer worthy of protection. But appearances led

both Lady Charlotte and yourself widely from the truth. Indeed, my dear Lady Jane, indeed I *am* innocent. My tears were not "the effect of rage at being discovered"—nor were they "tears of compunction at the injuries I had done." No, Madam, they were a little tribute of gratitude to heaven, for a particular mark of its bounty towards me. The explanation, however, is, at present, out of my power, as it relates to more persons than myself—and neither the dread of poverty, nor the anticipation of any other evil, shall ever impel me to a breach of confidence. But I solemnly declare that I am still worthy of your friendship, favor and protection. What must be my situation, if you continue to believe me criminal!

I am well aware, Madam, that any thing your brother may say in vindication of my conduct, will, in the eyes of my accuser, serve as a confirmation of my guilt. At present, we are, neither of us, at liberty to enter into the particulars of our conver-

sation; but you may rest assured that we shall never cease asserting our innocence to the last. Never in his life did your brother make me any improper advances; and even, if he had, are the principles of her whom you have preserved so little known to you, that you should suspect her having given him any encouragement? Pardon my presumption, Madam, in thus addressing you, and deign to allow, that, although every circumstance seems to join strongly against me, still there *is* a *possibility* of my being innocent.

Believe me when I say, that the kindness which you have hitherto shown me, can never be erased from a heart so grateful as that of

JULIA THOMAS.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Lady Jane Forester to Julia Thomas.

I AM surprised at receiving a letter from Julia Thomas, but at little loss what reply to give it, as to acquit her is utterly impossible. The situation Lady Charlotte saw you in, and to which I was myself a witness—also the many corroborating circumstances which the servants have since related, all carry conviction along with them. But, indeed, my brother's silence alone is such a strong proof of your guilt and ingratitude, that I desire you will trouble me with no more of your letters. His principles are too just, to suffer any person to be wrongfully accused, if in his power to remove the suspicion.

When I reflect upon the situation in which I found you, when I first took you into my service, I cannot but think myself used as my credulity deserves. I now

advise you, as one that *was* your friend, to turn your thoughts to repentance and amendment, and to desist from any further attempt at a fruitless vindication. As to character, I took you without any, and should be very imprudent, not to say very unjust, were I to give you one, which would get you a place. Your future conduct may procure you friends among those who are ignorant of your ungrateful behaviour towards a family, in which you have been treated with so much kindness. I once for all insist upon your writing to me no more letters, as I can pay no attention to their contents.

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER III.

Lady Jane Forester to the Duchess of Birom.

I AM quite grieved at the alarm your Grace has suffered on my account; but I am sure you will deem the apology sufficient,

when I tell you of the state of distraction we have all been in at the Lodge. In short, the concerns of others so wholly engrossed me, that I forgot my own, till the very hour arrived, which I had promised your Grace should find me sitting at your table—and I am sorry it is not in my power to say when I can next enjoy that pleasure, as I have two invalids to look after.

You will be surprised to learn that all my pleasant schemes of spending a few days at the castle are defeated by the infamous conduct of the creature we were all so fond of. Yet, unless I name Julia Thomas, you will never imagine it possible she should be the object of my censure. Nevertheless, it is a real fact, and the Lodge is become a scene of universal consternation. Surely, Beauty, without Virtue, is a curse, not a blessing. When I see your Grace, I will tell you how I first met with her, and shall expect to hear you say, That I deserve the disappointment. I am indeed miserable, at

finding that my kindness has been lavished upon so unworthy an object. Could you believe, that, modest, virtuous as this creature seemed, she has seduced my sister's husband? Yet, it is so. Lady Charlotte opened the Library-door, rather unexpectedly, when she beheld him kneeling at the girl's feet, one of her hands locked in both his, while with the other she was wiping her eyes, which were drowned in tears. I cannot express the shock I experienced at such a scene, nor describe the horror which poor Lady Charlotte felt at the discovery of her husband's infidelity. He assumed a look of perfect surprise, at being interrupted in so unpleasant a manner, while the girl displayed a composure which appeared the result of real innocence. What an adept in *art* to conquer thus effectually the chidings of conscience! I shudder at the recollection of having had such a creature under my roof.

My sister upbraided her; but I did not descend so far as to turn my eyes towards her, and I ordered the housekeeper, before

her face, to dismiss the girl instantly. Lady Charlotte pressed my hand, in token of acknowledgment, and went up to her own room, where she was seized with violent hysterics. My brother never attempted to follow her, nor to extenuate his fault. To me, indeed, he protested that the creature was guiltless, and to prove it, called heaven to witness he thought her an angel. This, you may be certain, I cautioned him against, for the sake of his poor wife. Indeed the transaction was too barefaced, to admit of any palliation. He sat up in his study during the whole night, while I spent the same time in endeavouring to soothe my sister, who is much hurt at his forming this connexion in the very house—it is adding insult to injury.

I persuaded my sister to be reconciled as soon as possible; but a quarter of an hour's conversation has made matters still worse, as he vindicates the creature, instead of asking forgiveness. They are both really ill through agitation and vexation: he, however, has had the grace to

beg of me to make his peace with Lady Charlotte, which I have all along aimed at; but she certainly is excusable for resenting his behaviour.

Surely, never were people so deceived as we have been. For four years has this girl played the hypocrite, without suspicion: she has been cried up to the skies as a miracle of beauty, virtue and modesty, and after all, it is come to this. I suspect other gentlemen were interested in her being here; else she had not met with such undeserved encomiums. As soon as I am happy enough to see friendship and good humour restored, I shall hasten to the castle, to make my peace with your Grace; but I fear it will be some time before I can leave the Lodge.

I remain, with affection,

Your Grace's most dutiful Niece,

JANE FORESTER.

P. S. The General is in high fortune. *Le voilà qui entre, et moi qui le charge de mes dépêches.* Pray, do not suffer him

to return to town this night; for, I am quite uneasy on account of the cold air and the fear of robbers, or perhaps for some other reasons. Do not show him this article, for, God knows! he is vain enough already, and I fear I furnish him with too many reasons for being so.

LETTER IV.

Julia Thomas to Lady Jane Forester.

YOUR answer, Madam, to my letter, is a new trial to my feelings. I cannot let your Ladyship condemn me so decidedly, unheard. My senses are upon the torture—I *must*—I *will* be acquitted by your justice. I am injured beyond expression—I *cannot* submit to be branded with crimes my nature revolts at. I beg—I entreat—I conjure you, Madam, to hear me—your brother's silence is *not* a proof

of my guilt. Nothing less than the extreme sense I entertain of your Ladyship's past goodness could induce me to implore a second time the justice you have so peremptorily denied me.

You took me, Madam, destitute of every hope—without a home—without money, and without friends. You had compassion on me—you fed me—cloathed me and took me in—you distinguished me by your confidence and friendship. No act of mine, I still persist in saying, has ever made me forfeit either—'tis the only consolation I have left to support me. I disobey your commands, in again addressing you—for one instant, *suppose* me innocent, and try to form an idea of my sufferings. Alas! Lady Jane, they are too much for me. Familiarized with misfortune, from my cradle, I *will*, if you still refuse my just demand, accommodate my mind to this new, this unmerited persecution—I trust the time will come, when my honor shall be cleared from stain. Alas! Madam, I

am not what I seem, in more senses than one. I am, Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most injured and unhappy servant,

JULIA THOMAS.

LETTER V.

General Harrington to Lady Jane Forester.

MY DEAR MADAM,

YOUR kind attention to your sister, extorts admiration and complaint at the same time. I cannot converse with you, I find, till she is well again. Twice did I call to-day, without being able to behold my amiable friend. In mercy, do not again put me to so severe a trial, for I must disobey you —at nine, I shall call at your door.

Seriously, I must see you, having much to say—two whole days have passed, without any intercourse between us, though I am

sure you knew that I was in your brother's chamber. Upon my honor, I know not what to think. He protests your maid Julia is highly injured, and that he never had a thought to the girl's prejudice, and he is convinced that she would not have continued in your service, if he had made any advances. I fear he is sometimes delirious; for, he said *She had lent him a thousand pounds.* That circumstance you and I know cannot be. He grasped my hand and implored me to promise that I would protect her. This I replied was impossible, as it would be the height of indelicacy to my adored Jane. Yet, he afterwards urged me so closely, that I think you might at least hear what she has to say. I begin to be of opinion that she is above her present station—French and Italian are not known to the vulgar. If you choose that I should inquire of *her* the particulars of Monday night, I will do it; but I shall personally attend your orders this evening. Till then, my much loved Jane, adieu! Three-and-thirty days are

yet to come, till these diurnal adieus have an end. Yes, my inestimable friend, I picture to myself such scenes of happiness —anticipate such sources of delight in such a companion, that I am an enviable creature, though I have three-and-thirty days to remain *very unhappy*. Let our only contest be which shall love, esteem, and even *obey* the other most. Ever, *ever*

Your's

GEORGE HARRINGTON.

LETTER VI.

Lady Jane Forester to Julia Thomas.

BE assured, Julia, that, were it in my power, I should suppress my feelings. Your declarations of innocence affect and distress me. You know my heart would too readily listen to the emotions of com-

passion with which you inspire me, if I could, in my cool moments, acquit myself of partiality. The desire of finding you blameless would warp my mind too much in your favor, to allow of my forming an unbiassed judgment. Indeed, Julia, there are so many circumstances—and those of so strong a nature . . . . . However, be satisfied that I am not your enemy. I even lament the loss I sustain, in being obliged to part with one who suited my temper and disposition so well as you did. Be content with this declaration, I beseech you, for I am harrassed to death with fatigue and vexation. My brother is very ill, and my sister attends him day and night. Good God! What would she think of me, were she to know that I am writing to the cause of all her affliction.

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER VII.

The Dachess of Birom to Lady Jane Forester.

YOUR letter, dear Lady Jane, has quite astonished me. Indeed, my reason for writing to you, the morning after my disappointment, was the idea of your being confined with the sprain you got, on stepping out of your carriage, which, as you make no mention of it, I trust is no longer inconvenient.

Your pretty damsel's conduct has, I own, surprised me, as I always felt a strong inclination to like her, there seemed to be so much natural modesty and native propriety about her. However, men, I find, are better judges of women than we are; Sir James always put on a sarcastic sneer, when I praised the girl, though he echoed my words. You may recollect that, being one day, in the green-house, listening to her singing, he combated

your assertion, that "A fine voice was a great advantage," by saying that, "In low people, such accomplishments generally led them to ruin." He owns he always looked for this denoument to your enthusiastic admiration of the pretty Julia.

I sincerely hope my niece Charlotte will have too much good sense to continue the sullens to a kind husband, in the main, for an infidelity so *fashionable.* Seriously speaking, it will be wise to pass it over; for, it is very dangerous to be one hour at variance, for such connexions, lest disagreement should become habitual. Write soon, as I shall be anxious to hear how matters are adjusted. I propose being in town on Thursday, when I will contrive to call at your door some hour in the evening—so, give orders to admit me.

I always am,

Your truly affectionate aunt,

J. Birom.

LETTER VIII.

Lady Jane Forester to Julia Thomas.

THE wish to be just and the knowledge of the concern you take in every thing that affects me, makes me take up the pen, to inform you, that, last night, my poor brother's life was in imminent danger. He solemnly protested your innocence, but was in such a violent agitation upon the subject, that we dared not urge him to an explanation. I am now ready to hear you; but, as my sister was silent when I proposed seeing you, I would not wish a soul to know of the interview. If I can be convinced that you have not deviated from right, I will, as far as it is in my power, repair the injury you have sustained, and justify you to every body—you may depend upon this.

My brother has rested for two hours, and seems evidently composed at my owning that I gave credit to the serious declaration

which he made in the morning. He repeated it anew to my sister, who appears not only averse from believing it true, but even piqued at me, for assenting to what Mr. Egremont says.

My dear General has kept up my drooping spirits, during the severe conflict they have undergone. He joins with me in urging you to disclose the mystery you conceal; for, neither your education nor your appearance betrays any thing common. We have frequently remarked this, though I forbore pressing you to a communication which you acknowledged you wished to avoid: but the passage in your letter, in which you avow that *you are not what you seem*, makes me very anxious to know the particulars of your story. We wish to befriend you, and you can have nothing to apprehend from either of us.

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER IX.

The same to the same.

My poor brother had, last night, a very dangerous relapse. However, heaven be praised! he is still living. Dr. Mason, who had sat up with him, desired my sister and me to retire to our own apartments, as he thought our dear invalid would fall into a gentle rest. Just as we were going to depart, Mr. Egremont called his wife to the bedside, and with astonishing fervor, begged heaven to make atonement to Julia, for the injuries he had involuntarily done her, and for the sufferings he had occasioned. He called upon every thing sacred to attest your purity, and conjured Dr. Mason to afford you his kind protection. "Be to her," said he, "as a father for *my* sake—she is an angel—she is innocence itself, yet experiencing the severest wrongs, and undergoing the most cruel tortures of

mind, inflicted by the very family she has preserved from ruin. I alone am acquainted with her unequalled worth. When my affairs are settled, pay her one thousand pounds, which she has lent me at two different periods. I make this my laſt request to my dearest Charlotte, in the presence of you both." He was too much agitated to proceed.

For God's sake! my poor Julia, what is all this mystery? Was my brother light-headed? or is it possible you had this money to lend? Lady Charlotte and I are perplexed beyond measure—and he is so much dissatisfied at the face of doubt my sister wore, that he has scarcely returned any answer to any thing she has since said to him.

Dr. Mason assured my brother that he would faithfully attend to the performance of his request. As he affirms that he was perfectly free from every symptom of delirium, my sister is persuaded that you have been injured, and unites her voice to ours, in entreating you to return immediately.

We long to testify how much, how truly we respect your patient submission to the sentence of such unjust and blinded judges. For myself, I can only say that Julia Thomas is more sincerely beloved than ever by her true friend.

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER X.

Julia Thomas to Lady Jane Forester.

AM I, my honored Lady, am I thus rewarded for my sufferings? Since you are inclined to hear, I am by anticipation acquitted. A thousand, thousand thanks for the composure of mind I already feel—I long to hear your voice corroborate your pen, in pronouncing me guiltless. But tempt me not—The poor good creature, who received me when I was destitute—

which has been the case more than once—now lies upon a bed of ſickness, thanking heaven for ſending me to nurſe her. In ſuch a ſituation, and with ſo many obligations on my head, I cannot—muſt not deſert her. I believe I have often mentioned Mary Thomas, my nurſe, to your Ladyſhip. She has been a parent to me in all my diſtreſſes. My ſpirits, ſo lately a prey to melancholy, are now ſo happily compoſed with the balmy reſtorative you have adminiſtered, that the good creature ſays ſhe ſhall die in peace. However, I do not deſpair making her enjoy many more hours of comfort in this world. I am convinced ſhe would grieve at my abſence in a manner that would retard her recovery; for, otherwiſe, I have two or three guineas that would procure her a more able nurſe than myſelf.

Since Mr. Egremont has prevailed upon Lady Charlotte and you, Madam, to ſuſpend your judgment, and to believe that I am not the unworthy creature you thought me, I think it would be improper in me

to anticipate his explanation of the whole affair—an explanation which would be most painful to my feelings. As he gets well, he will naturally acquaint you both with the particulars. But, if it still continue Lady Jane's wish, as well as the General's, I will, during my attendance at the cottage, send them my sad history, for *their* perusal *only*. I should, indeed, be distressed at any other person's knowing the afflictions which have pursued me, even from my cradle, or the imprudences of a very distinguished family. I will immediately sit down, and show my readiness to comply with the demands of my dear mistress, and convey my narrative, from time to time, to the Lodge.

I remain,
With great respect and duty,
Your Ladyship's faithful,
JULIA THOMAS.

LETTER XI.

Lady Jane Forester to the Duchess of Birom.

I COULD not go to sleep in peace, my dear aunt, did I not communicate to you the happy event which has taken place, since I wrote to you last. We have all been egregiously mistaken in Julia—She is, not only guiltless, but the best creature that ever existed. But I must endeavour to make myself intelligible; for, I really am so overjoyed at my brother's recovery, his reconciliation with his wife, and the poor girl's innocence, that, without some effort, I shall not be able to express myself with any degree of regularity.

Mr. Egremont has indeed been most dangerously ill, and I believe nothing but the idea of his being on his death-bed could have brought forth the declaration of his follies. This, however, is only *my* conjecture; but what else could induce

him to keep an obstinate silence, for five whole days. It could not fail to impress us with a belief that the girl was indefensible—and the conclusion was certainly very natural. Thank God! he has now removed the veil, and the character of Julia Thomas is as exalted as we had imagined it debased. I am so thoroughly convinced of the interest which your Grace takes in every thing that concerns your friends at the Lodge, that I hasten to send you a few particulars, though I have no leisure to arrange them properly; but I know I may always depend on my dear aunt's pardon for my omissions.

About three months ago, during my sister's absence and mine, Lord Mounterrace paid a morning visit to my brother, who was then confined with a cold. Mr. Egremont, who hates dining by himself, asked this man, though he never liked him, to keep him company and spend the evening at his house—the invitation was accepted. After dinner, they drank freely, and my poor brother, whose good resolves

want but very little temptation to be overturned, proposed a game at dice, which you may be sure Lord Mounterrace did not decline. In the short space of two hours, Mr. Egremont lost five thousand pounds, and our delightful little Casino, on the banks of the Thames. The Earl, fearing lest my brother should not be willing to resign such property when he came to his senses, wisely determined to secure himself, by having a bond instantly filled up. He accordingly went to procure one, and brought it to be signed the same evening. Mr. Egremont highly resented this hasty transaction, and a very warm conversation took place, which, without any premeditated intention, Julia happened to overhear. She now thought the moments were too precious to be lost in debating about propriety, and therefore, determined to frustrate the scheme, at least until my brother should be sober, when he would be capable to act for himself. She stood waiting for the moment when candles would be required for sealing, and

witnesses for signing the detested parchment. The time arrived, and she contrived to carry them in, when the Earl asked her to set her name to the bond. My brother seemed stupified and stammered out: "Yes, yes, sign away." No sooner was it placed into her hands, than she tore it to pieces, to the astonishment of both, and determined not to quit my inebriated brother, while the wretch stayed in the house. They both stormed at her most unmercifully; but she bore it all with her usual patience, till Lord Mounterrace, who is a little affected by drink, gave her so much provocation, that she, at last, told him "That, if the dice with which his Lordship had been playing, were such as a man of honor ought to use, he had no reason to doubt Mr. Egremont's discharging the debt with the greatest punctuality." His confusion, at hearing this, was so great, that he stuttered out half a dozen curses and quitted the house, at one in the morning. Whether a consciousness that the

charge was merited had a proper effect upon his guilty mind I know not, but he never has demanded his winnings since.

The servants carried up my brother to bed, and he never woke till tea-time the next evening, when faithful Julia was ordered to make it. She now thought the duty she owed to the family required that she should remonstrate with him, even if she ran the risque of losing my place, for what might be termed *impertinence.* She began by saying, "That I had conferred too many favors upon her, to allow of her silence, when she saw any thing going forward which would endanger my happiness; for, nothing could befal him or Lady Charlotte, but Lady Jane would also be a sufferer." As he seemed to be quite *low,* she thought it a good time to expostulate with him on the consequences of gaming. She represented to him the anguish in which he was plunging an amiable wife, and the misery which must be her portion as well as his, if he continued to play thus desperately. My brother looked at her

with a fixed melancholy in his countenance, and, after a pause of some minutes, replied: "That he was indeed become desperate—that he had mortgaged his estate—had borrowed money from advertising Jews—had given his wife's jewels to be disposed of, unknown to her, and that he was importuned to death by his tradesmen, particularly his taylor and confectioner, who insisted on the payment of their bills, and threatened to have recourse to the law, if they were not discharged. The only chance he had of satisfying them was, to try his luck with the money which the jewels should produce, when, if he was fortunate, he would pay every demand, and for the future, retrench, or, if unsuccessful, *be off*. "Yes, Julia; I must positively be off."

—"Gracious heaven! Consider..... My mistress—Lady Charlotte, your poor wife, Sir—she would certainly go distracted."

—"Not before your master, child. Oh! I am, I *am* indeed—distracted."

—" Be composed, Sir; and forgive a servant, for presuming to advise, or to question. What sum would be required, to get over the present pressure?"

—" Oh! more than I can raise, child, unless I can sell the jewels—Five hundred pounds."

—" Then, Sir, if five hundred pounds are sufficient, replace the jewels, and honor the fortunate Julia, by borrowing all she is worth in the world. Not even my dear Lady Jane knows that I possess such a trifle—I had my reasons for concealing it from her—she might have urged me to quit her service and set up in business. Take it, Sir, and, when you are able, pay me again; till that time, I *will* not want it."

Guess my brother's astonishment—it appeared as a miracle heaven had wrought in his favor. She intreated him not to mention this circumstance to either his wife or me, saying, " It would distress her to death to receive thanks for following the bent of her own inclinations, and selfishly purchasing such a heartfelt satisfaction, as

he now enabled her to enjoy." This is my brother's relation of the affair—Your Grace will, no doubt, think this destitute Julia an extraordinary being.——

I meant to have gone on, but I am obliged to take my seat at the harpsichord, as he, poor invalid, is waiting impatiently to hear me.—I was, last night, at the Opera, and, though I am as thin and hagged in my looks as possible, from the worry of spirits I have endured for the last seven days, yet I received as many unmeaning compliments, as when I *deserve* them. There's a vain speech!—

Adieu! my dear Duchess, and believe me your dutiful niece,

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER XII.

The same to the same.

How was I mortified, at my return from the theatre, on Friday, to find that your Grace had been at St. James's Square! However, as Lady Charlotte assures me that you did not extend your visit to the length of ten minutes, I will console myself for the loss, as I was extremely well entertained. I find my sister has acted a godmother's part by me, promising and vowing that I should employ this morning at my pen, and you see *I* am as good as *her* word. Every day brings something new to light, and we have just discovered that Lady Charlotte's maid has given birth to all our unhappiness, and that jealousy, not of a swain, but of beauty, has been the cause of it.

It appears that, some weeks ago, the General and my brother were discoursing

on beauty, when they agreed that they seldom saw a woman that had no defect whatever. One wanted *only* a little more height; a second had *too thin* a lip; a third *too thick* a wrist; in short, something was the matter with every one, till the General said, "That he must except my maid Julia; for, she was as perfect a figure as he ever beheld:" They agreed that her shape, neck, arms and hands were exquisitely turned, and so they certainly are. "There is my wife's maid, Mrs. Bowyer," said Mrs. Egremont; "she is not much amiss." "No," replied the General, "*not much amiſs*, but Julia is perfect."

Now, these damsels happened to be walking under the parlour-window, when they heard this interesting conversation—I mean the General's reply. The consequence is not difficult to guess at—Bowyer has hated the girl ever since. She imagined that the most certain way of getting her out of the house was to make my sister jealous—and this she has been trying every

method to effect, but by innuendoes and insinuations only. A few days before this disturbance in the family, she went so far as to say to my sister: "That her master could find fault and see defects in every soul in the house, but Julia Thomas—she, indeed, was a privileged person and could not do wrong—beauty was of more service to some folks than merit in others." Her mistress ordered her out of the room, before she had concluded this eloquent harangue, but, presently after, rang the bell. She re-entered, when my sister seriously told her, that if ever she presumed to talk upon the same subject again, she should instantly be discharged, and she forgave her now, only because she did not like to have a stranger about her, during her confinement. Bowyer cried, asked pardon—and kept her jealousy smothered for a couple of months longer; but it was far from being extinguished, as you will see by the sequel.

I believe I told your Grace, in a former letter, of some retrenchments having ta-

ken place at the Lodge. Every thing is now so well regulated and so properly arranged by my sister's excellent management, that five years will clear the estate by paying off every encumbrance, and I really believe that my brother is become a proselyte. My trustees have tied up my fortune in such a manner, that I cannot contribute any thing worth speaking of, towards extricating them from their present embarrassment.

On the fatal evening of the discovery, my brother seemed to be very melancholy and low-spirited: we enquired into the cause—he complained of the headache. We certainly felt uneasy, but never once apprehended that this disease lay in the mind, or we would have been more so—presently, he left us and walked into his library. The attentive Julia, who had observed, that, for the whole day, he had avoided speaking to her, as usual, for, we have never treated her like any other domestic, and apprehensive lest he had met

with some new disaster, followed him into the room and shut the door.

"Have the goodness, Sir," said she, "to pardon an officious servant, an humble friend, for enquiring whether a little cash would be of service to you just now. I have, very unexpectedly, received a second remittance, and I would rather place the money into your hands than any other's, if you would oblige me by becoming my banker."

"Do I hear right?" said he. "Is it possible you can wish to save me a second time? O! Julia, you know not how unworthy I am of assistance. I have forfeited my word to you; for, I have played again: unluckily, I have lost, and have paid my *debts of honour* with the very money which was to have paid my tradesmen.—I now fear I am without resource; for, you *cannot*,—nay, *ought not* to trust me a second time."

"As you condemn yourself so properly, Sir," replied she, "I will spare you any

further mention of the subject, and only assure you that my friendship shall cease with the very next folly of this nature which you commit. Then I will certainly remove from this family, as I can never prevail upon myself to remain a spectatrix of the miseries which will undoubtedly be their portion, if you do not immediately reform. I have a second five hundred pounds remitted me, but have my reasons for concealing this event from every body. I beseech you, Sir, to appear cheerful before the ladies, and I will supply you with a power-of-attorney to sell it out for me, to-morrow, at the Bank. But, for this purpose, Mr. Egremont, I am under the necessity of confiding a far more precious deposit to your honor—my name, hitherto concealed from every individual but the woman who nursed me. Promise me, Sir, that you never will divulge, even to your wife, any circumstance relating to me, until you have *my* permission; not even the trifling service which I have been so

happy as to render you. Remember I exact this promise."

My brother assured her he would religiously observe it.

"I am," resumed Julia, "of a very distinguished family—my name is *St. Helen*, and I am the daughter of an ancient Baronet, and niece to another who ruined wife, child and ward by gambling—but let me turn from the horrid picture."

Mr. Egremont entreated her to consider what he had to say, as he had already promised the generous Julia *St. Helen*, to adhere to every article she requested, if she persisted in it. He besought her to suffer him to communicate to his wife and sister the discovery she had just made. "You will then," said he, "be as ourselves; the dignity of your nature *alone* ought, at least, to give you this distinction, without the advantages of birth, to which I now learn you are entitled. It is a cruel injunction you lay upon *me* not to inquire any further, but I will be im-

plicitly obedient—upon my honor. Yet, my guardian angel, suffer me to tell Charlotte—only Charlotte, of the obligations which we owe you." He dropped on his knee. "How can I ever thank you as I feel."

"You have promised," answered she. "If you disclose *any* part of what I have said or *done*, I *never* will forgive you. The servants are carrying in supper; again give me your word of honor that no person whatever shall wring from you the confession I have made—nor *ever* till I unbind your vow."

—"*Both*, since you desire it, shall be sacred; I swear it upon your hand."—At this moment did my sister open the door.

Her officious maid had observed Julia going into the library, and, working up a plentiful shower of tears, placed herself in her mistress' way, naturally guessing that she would ask her the cause of her affliction. Poor Charlotte fell into the snare. "Bowyer," said she, "you seem unwell." —"Oh! my Lady," answered the other,

" can I see you thus ill-used by that vile wretch and my master, and not be moved? Use your own ears and eyes; if I wrong her, dismiss me—only open the door." Scarcely knowing what she did, she opened it, and found my brother, as you already know, on his knees. I myself ordered her to be dismissed from the house, and she went away, unbefriended, unprotected, and disgraced, from a family whom she had so essentially served. I can assure your Grace that I have shed more tears of remorse, and that I feel more compunction than perhaps I need do, as she appeared so guilty, that our conduct towards her was, not only justifiable, but even necessary. Alas! how often do we suffer our judgments to be misled by false appearances!

However, as she is good, for the sake of goodness, she, next day, enclosed the power-of-attorney to my brother, with a more urgent entreaty than ever, *not* to ruin her, by meaning to serve her—and *not* to forget his sacred promise of concealing both her name and what she had

done. But, afterwards, hearing of his illness, and apprehensive lest the jealousy of Lady Charlotte should, not only encrease it, but even endanger her own life, she sent a note, by which she gave him leave to tell *any* truth, that could restore the harmony of the family. When the letter arrived, my brother was delirious, and, on opening it, the contents appeared to us so mysterious, that we could not comprehend their meaning, and that we stood puzzling our brains, and forming a thousand conjectures, until returned reason gave him the power of relating the facts. Charming girl! Is it possible to withhold one's admiration of her virtues?

It would be idle to make any apologies for the length of this letter, since you are so kind as to say that you are obliged to me for the little anecdotes that concern the inhabitants of the Lodge. I, therefore, simply conclude by subscribing myself, your Grace's most affectionate,

JANE FORESTER.

LETTER XIII.

Julia St. Helen to Lady Jane Forester.

It seems so like writing a novel, that I am half ashamed to convey to your Ladyship the events of my truly unfortunate life, particularly when I reflect that the General is also to see the weakness of which this heart has once been guilty. But these fears will not operate so far as to make me conceal one circumstance from my dear Lady Jane. I am obliged to relate wholly from memory, which, however, I can do very minutely, from the time I was eight years old. For intelligence prior to that period, I must apply to nurse for assistance; for, in those early days, I was too happy to be very observant.

It is not necessary that I should say any more of my family than that I am the daughter of Sir John Ellisborough, by the

second daughter of Lord Seymour, whose clandestine marriage with *my* father was never forgiven by *her's*. At the death of my mother's sister, Lord Seymour annexed all his personal property to the title and estate, which devolved to a third cousin; but with so distant a branch of my mother's family I have never had any intercourse. Previous to my father's marriage, however, he had changed his name to St. Helen, for a very ample estate.

My poor mother paid the debt of nature, when she gave birth to her unfortunate child. Alas! how often have I had occasion to lament the severity of my loss! My father's affection for her was transfered on her babe—nay, perhaps, with additional increase. He forsook all society, abandoned his former amusements and gave himself up to grief and his child. He used to nurse me for hours together, when I was too young to repay him even with a smile. However, time removed this lethargy of sense, and I could soon return love for love, by fondling his knees and lisping my

happiness to its earthly author. Sometimes, I distressed this dear, this ever to be regretted parent by my tears; for, when he would survey me with the most exulting satisfaction, the resemblance which I bore to his beloved wife would melt him into tenderness, and my little heart, without then knowing why, would beat to excess, until tears came to my relief. This painful pleasure is still very dear to my remembrance.

I was only four years old, when my father carried me on a visit to his only brother, who became so attached to his little prattling niece, that he often said he would bequeath me the whole of his fortune, as he had determined never to marry. He now began to discourse with my father, about his seclusion from society; which he said had already lasted but too long, and used many arguments in order to induce him to return into it. At first, he seemed rather averse from altering a mode of life, which the practice of four years had rendered habitual; but, after a

time, that aversion began to wear away; so that, at last, he found himself so much engaged in parties of pleasure, that his little girl seldom saw him after his breakfast. My uncle's motives were certainly very good; but, alas! they proved the source of all my subsequent misfortunes. Hunting became his favourite sport, and he never omitted any opportunity of enjoying this new amusement. On the very day that I completed my eighth year, he fell from his horse, and was so dreadfully bruised, that, after languishing a little time, he expired. Surely, the hour of my birth was marked by heaven with black. Have I not, my dear Lady Jane, cause to think so? In that hour, I lost my mother—eight years after, on the same day, my father followed her to the grave—And what am I myself? an unknown being—in poverty, though born to affluence, doomed to be the sport of fortune, and distinguished not by what is justly due to my inheritance, but by such a series of misfortunes as has deprived me of even the hope of regaining

my tranquillity. Gracious heaven! forgive if I sometimes repine at thy wise dispensations, and grant my heart a perfect submission to thy decrees!

Upon the death of my father, my uncle received me under his roof, and made it his principal study to provide for me the best education. He gave me masters for drawing, music, and dancing; I had also a French governess, who taught me her own language, as well as embroidery and all manner of ornamental and fancy-work. Music and drawing, however, were my favourite occupations; indeed, it was said that I played and sung even too well for one in whom they were no more than mere accomplishments. The partiality which my uncle, Sir William, felt for me made him speak frequently of his little ward, and induced many elegant ladies to pay him morning visits, on purpose to see me. My being with him made his house a privileged place, and the young and handsome no longer considered it in the light of a bachelor's dwelling. Dinners, balls, con-

certs, &c. were frequently given; in short, it became a fashionable place in the full extent of the word.

It was at one of these amusements that my uncle became acquainted with a young lady, who was then upon a visit in the neighbourhood. He almost instantly became enamoured of her, and to such a degree, that on the very next day he made her proposals too advantageous to be rejected, even had he been less agreeable, as she was without portion. She accordingly gave her consent; within three months they were married, and I imagined myself the happiest creature in the world, in having an aunt young enough to engage in the same amusements which were so dear to her niece.

I am come to the conclusion of my paper, and have but just room to say that my nurse is out of her bed to-day, and as the clergyman lends her a newspaper, which she is too weak to read herself, you

see I have a new occupation. As soon as she is asleep, I shall resume my pen.

I am, &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XIV.

The same to the same.

EACH day, madam, after my uncle's marriage, was productive of some new pleasure. A theatre was built in the course of the summer, and the performers were people of rank in the neighbourhood. Two days in the week were set a part for exhibiting plays, another for a ball, and the rest were taken up with dinners at home and abroad, or sometimes with water-parties, which the best music was certain to make delightful. In short, no expence

was spared to render Lady Ellisborough the first woman, and her house the most splendid and fashionable in the county. However, in the course of four years, in which my aunt had a son, my uncle felt it *necessary* to like another county better; for, he had made so free with his estate, that economy was become the only possible resource left to extricate himself, and as his debts already amounted to fifteen thousand pounds, he had but little prospect of clearing off his embarrassments till about the time of his son's coming of age. He, therefore, set off for a distant county, as he gave out, to be near his wife's relations, but in fact in order to retrench. You know, madam, how difficult it is for any one to do this essentially, who has lived in the expensive manner I have described, and who will not avow the necessity of adopting that measure. Sir William and his Lady were thought so fashionable, so liberal and so agreeable, that every one who had the smallest pretensions to be known to them, procured introductions, or

took the privilege of paying the first visit to the new comers. This, otherwise, laudable, custom, proved in the present instance a most unfortunate one, as it compelled them to mix again with company, for fear of offending persons who had made overtures for their friendship. It is true we had neither theatre, balls, nor indeed any very expensive parties at our new abode; but we had friendly sociable dinners, obliging friends, who came with their four or six horses, and as many servants, for two or three days; in a word, our house was like an inn; but Sir William welcomed his visitors so heartily, that they really had every reason to believe they conferred a great favour upon him, by taking up their abode under his roof. To say the truth, they were not mistaken; for, *reflection* was now become so very troublesome to him, that he was never at ease but when taken from *himself*.

You will not be surprised, madam, to hear that, after nine years extravagance, my uncle's house was filled with executions.

My aunt and I were instantly removed; furniture, jewels, carriages were sold, and still a very large debt remained undischarged. My uncle's attorney gave this information to Lady Ellisborough with great minuteness, whilst I thought every moment he staid, after he had communicated his intelligence, was almost an age, as it prevented me from venting the effusions of my heart. When the wished-for minute arrived, I ran to my aunt and told her; "That I never till then had known the value of thirty thousand pounds, since it would enable me to make all those I so tenderly loved happy. You must all be *my* guests now," said I, "instead of my being *yours*, and my uncle shall be happy, because I will enable him to rid himself of all his embarrassments, before we enter on any thing else. Dearest aunt, little Charles shall be my boy, will you not, my dear?" "Never, never, my dear Julia" said his poor mother "will I suffer you to injure yourself on my account. I am criminal to the highest degree. *I*, that ought to

have confined my expences within my husband's income, had it been ever so circumscribed, have lived in unbounded extravagance, and instead of taking warning by the first crush, have brought, thoughtlessly brought, my husband and child to disgrace. You know I have sometimes spoke on the subject to Sir William, even before you; I have renewed it when alone, but he never would listen to it long, saying, 'He never introduced his gloomy ideas to cloud my brighter ones, and he wished me to show him the same complaisance.' In short, I dreaded to offend him, and therefore, ceased to remonstrate. I will own that, at times, I fancied he had resources, and as he never acquainted me with the real value of his income, I quickly regained my wonted cheerfulness."

After a heavy shower of tears, which I vainly attempted to dry up, she protested no consideration should induce her to accept my generous offer to clear away the debt, or to become a tax upon me." "Can you," I replied, "call that exqui-

site sensation which benevolence inspires a tax? I can truly say I never thought myself happy till now, and how can I be otherwise, when the power of making you so is in my own breast?" I was in this instance more obstinate than my aunt, and with tears and entreaties urged her not to deny me the highest satifaction I could receive. I will not repeat what she said in reply, for she was always fondly attached to me. After a hundred refusals, she at last said: "Since it must be so, I resign my dearest Charles, my beloved boy, to your care and protection, but I never will become a burthen to the niece of a man whom I have led to folly and ruin." "Use these harsh terms if you like it," said I, "for your own conduct; but, for mercy's sake, do not grate my ears with the word *burthen.* Suppose the case reversed, would you think me a burthen to you? I know you would not; therefore, *I* will not give up the just right I have to make you happy. Have you not made me completely so during the many years I have

been with you? You yourself know that I have preferred your society to many advantageous offers which have been made me, although sanctioned by my uncle's approbation and strengthened by his arguments. Let me be the best judge of what will promote my peace. From this spot I will not depart, until you promise to come and live with me, till I change my condition, which at present I have no inclination to do. Should my uncle oppose my discharging his debts, at least, I hope he will not deny me the satisfaction of sharing a comfortable income with persons so dear to me. He knows I shall be wretched, nay, your reason tells you I *must* be so, while ungrateful, or prevented from proving my gratitude. In short, my dear Lady Ellisborough, I can be happy on no other condition; therefore, let me see whether you really love me."

At last, after a contest which showed my poor aunt's remorse in the strongest light, I carried my point, and it was agreed that I should take a house near London,

as, could my uncle preserve his liberty, he would be able to attend his friends in power, who, in the days of his splendor, were constant visitors at his house, and from whom he had every reason to expect some act of friendship, which might prove beneficial to his family. I enjoyed the pleasure of surprising him with the plans I had formed, but no opportunity offered that day, as he was attended by several people during the time he was with my aunt, and as I knew they were employed about his affairs, I quitted the room till I heard them depart. On my coming in again, I found Lady Ellisborough more cheerful: she told me, That my uncle had left his best love to me, for he had been obliged to go with his attorney into Essex for four days, in order to adjust some affair which he had no opportunity of explaining.

During his absence, I endeavoured to amuse her, by talking over the *future*. Indeed, my anxieties for them made me earneſt in my pursuits, and hearing of a

patent place, which was to be had for eighteen hundred pounds, and which could be executed by a deputy, I determined to get it for my dear little Charles, whose father would be benefited by the employment it would afford him. A Colonel in the Guards of my acquaintance mentioned this place to a gentleman in my presence, and it instantly struck me as being a very desirable thing. Accordingly, I watched for an opportunity of speaking to him about it, though I very much wished to conceal the transaction from my aunt, till it was completed, and afterwards from every other person whatever, except Sir William. The Colonel, upon my mentioning my wish to become the purchaser, assured me That if I would permit him to transact the business for me, he would endeavour to acquit himself to my satisfaction. The desire that my dear little cousin should always be ignorant of an event that would make him feel an obligation to me, made me request to have the parchment brought to me to fill up; but,

as I said this, the idea struck me that the Colonel might imagine I was doing an improper action, and this, I am certain, crimsoned my face in an instant. "I see," said he, "I have done wrong—I have ten thousand pardons to ask—I have been impertinent; but, believe me, madam, I did not offer you my assistance from idle curiosity, but purely from the wish to serve you." "What does Colonel Mollineux mean?" returned I, really embarrassed. —"Mean! that I am shocked to death, at being the cause of one uncomfortable moment to a woman I so highly respect."

"Good God, Sir!" I resumed, "what can make you imagine you have done otherwise than obliged me, by your kind offer of managing this affair for me, who am so ignorant about business?" "Your endeavours, Madam," rejoined he, "are kindly intended to relieve me from the embarrassment my unfortunate speech has brought me into, but the distress and contrition I feel, at having occasioned one

uneasy sensation to Miss Julia St. Helen, are too strong to be easily effaced."

"How erroneous is this persuasion, Colonel!" said I; "upon my honor, it is only an idea of yours. I will be candid enough to own that I had the wish to conceal my little Charles's name upon this occasion, as it appears seeking for applause, to let any one share the secret with me; but I fear, when I think of it, such a thing as secrecy in a negociation like this is impossible." "And were those blushes the consequence of performing so amiable an action?" said he. "Pray," answered I, "do not give me a specimen of the very compliment I sought to avoid. I know I blushed, because it suddenly came into my mind that you might conjecture I was making an improper purchase." In consequence of this, I thought it necessary to explain, and having made him my confidant, in all that related to Charles, I requested him to get every thing ready, and then let me know exactly the sum that was required to put it into my cousin's posses-

sion. Being informed of it, I wrote to the Banker, who, by my uncle's order, had always supplied me with cash, and who used to receive the interest of my money at the Bank, desiring him to answer a draft for eighteen hundred pounds, which I should have occasion to draw upon him the next day. My aunt's spirits were greatly amended, and I was so thankful for the alteration, that I was more cheerful than usual, when the servant returned with a note from the Banker, informing me that he would call upon me in the evening. As I imagined it was merely to give me the form of drawing, I was quite elated with the thoughts of rejoicing my poor aunt, whose apartment I quitted to receive Mr. Smith in the parlour.

When I entered the room, Mr. Smith rose from his seat, and with a face of visible regret and concern, expressed his fears that I had been injured. "I am afraid, Madam," said he, "Sir William has wronged you; your note of this morning convinces me of it: I have no money of

your's; your uncle has settled his accounts with me full three months ago, and since that time, I have never seen him. I am ignorant of his affairs—I hope, Madam, that he has placed your money elsewhere to your advantage. I trust Sir William would not act dishonourably; yet, your ignorance of your own affairs naturally creates this apprehension in me." A cold shivering ran through my veins, on hearing this intelligence. Indeed, Lady Jane, the recollection of the sensations I then experienced makes me so extremely nervous, that I must lay by my pen; the next post shall convey to the Lodge a continuation of my story.

Nurse sends her duty, as also her thanks for the very pretty linen your Ladyship has so kindly dressed her in. She heard with pleasure that the General was worthy of being married to the most amiable woman in the world. I shall certainly quit the cottage, to witness that event. No one, my dear Lady Jane, can offer up more de-

vout prayers for your happiness, than your ever obliged,

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XV.

The same to the same.

WHAT were my feelings, when I had cause to imagine my uncle guilty of such baseness! They were too violent and too distracting. My aunt, deprived of the very resources I had so fondly promised her—myself, unable to complete my engagement with Colonel Mollineux—for the idea of being pennyless had no share in the hurry of my thoughts—That my uncle could have acted in so unworthy a manner was such mortification, that every other distress was absorbed in the present. My father's brother—the man whom I had re-

garded as a parent—in whose house I had spent my early years—whose conversation I loved—whose sentiments I approved—that *he* should involve me in his ruin—that he should deceive me—appeared so very impossible, that I at length broke silence. "Heaven," said I, "avert the danger of these threatening appearances. I will not think ill of my uncle till conviction flashes upon my senses. I trust, Sir, that you will have the goodness to confine your suspicions within your own breast. I will speak to my uncle the moment he returns, and till then it is impossible I should give credit to the supposition. If he is, what I trust we shall find him, innocent, I will not let you remain a moment in doubt. It is *I*, Sir, have done wrong; I ought to have spoken to my uncle, before I wrote to you, and by not doing so, I have given you, though involuntarily, cause to think amiss of him." Mr. Smith made his bow and left me.

When he was gone, I gave loose to my tears. All my plans for my aunt, for dear little Charles, for myself, were overturned. The Colonel was to come the following morning, by appointment. What could I say? If I told the truth, I might unjustly criminate Sir William—I could not descend to a lie, though, on such an occasion, I might conceal the truth. One moment, I determined to exact from him the word of a gentleman to be secret, and then state the cause of my inability to discharge my debt—the next, I upbraided myself for entertaining a thought so injurious to my uncle. I did not like the idea of making Colonel Mollineux my confidant in any thing; yet I was obliged to employ him in regard to the patent place, as it was a particular friend of his that had it to dispose of. He was a vain man, a declared lover, one I avoided, though he endeavoured to make every body believe that he was a favorite with me; in short, I was frequently rallied on his account, and had the fresh mortification to see that

my denying the charge never gained me one proselyte. From these remarks, you will not wonder at the dread I had, lest his vanity should lead him to construe this unfortunate event into a proof of my confidence in him.

I was so extremely harrassed by these perplexing thoughts, that I forgot for a time that I was going to make my aunt's tea, when the Banker called me from her. I, therefore, endeavoured to dry up my tears, and to be a hypocrite; for I was unwilling to give her one pang I could keep to myself: but the contrast was too great to pass unobserved; I had quitted her room *lighter than air*, in thought—I was returning with the heaviest dejection of spirits. My aunt saw through this affected composure, and sought to dissipate my melancholy by renewing the subject we were upon before the interruption. This was too much for me, for we had been planning our household, and laying schemes for future happiness. I could not restrain my tears—they flowed afresh. With ma-

ternal affection, she caught hold of my hand, and clasped me to her bosom, entreating me to tell her what had thus distressed me—whether any thing new had happened—and urged me to confide it to her. I endeavoured to persuade her that it was merely owing to a lowness of spirits, but she had the very essence of friendship in her composition, and therefore saw through the disguise.

"My dearest Julia, my loved niece," said she, "I conjure you to tell me faithfully and without any reserve, the conversation you have just had below with the stranger. Is it about Sir William? Is he well? For God's sake, tell me." I made her easy upon that score. "You know, my dear," added she, "I am not prompted by curiosity, but by anxiety—who was the person you have now seen?" "Mr. Smith, the Banker." "And what did he say,"?— "That I had no money in his hands."— "Why, I could have told you that, if I had supposed that you could be ignorant of it: but how could I imagine Sir William

would place your property in other hands, without first making you acquainted with it? He told me, six months ago, that he meant to take your affairs out of Mr. Smith's hands, who had some way or other displeased him. I hope my dear girl does not entertain a doubt injurious to her uncle: if she does . . . . but I know she cannot. To convince you that any suspicion would wrong him, I will relate to you a conversation that passed between us. I have once or twice tried to persuade him to borrow of you five hundred or a thousand pounds, which at that time I thought we should soon be able to repay you: but so great was his delicacy, that he commanded me never to speak upon the subject, as he said you would scarcely be at liberty to act as you chose. You certainly would lend the money, but then it might be that you did so, because you did not know how to refuse; besides which, he thought ill-natured people would say that he had exerted an undue influence over his ward; and these considerations had so

much weight with him, that I ceased to speak upon the subject."

"Indeed," replied I, "I have frequently pressed my uncle, since his embarrassments, to let me supply him with money; but he as frequently told me, That though he was my guardian, yet he acted in conjunction with two other gentlemen, who never would consent to my lending any money to him; and he appeared so fearful lest I should, in a manner, force him to accept, which I certainly meant to have done, that he extorted my faithful promise that I would not, which I reluctantly gave him. I assure you, my dear aunt, my present vexation proceeds from the disappointment of immediate cash. I had engaged to pay a large sum of money to-morrow at twelve o'clock; I had appointed the person to come and receive it, and I find myself unable to fulfil my promise. There is not a hope of my seeing my uncle, to bring me from this state of suspense, and consequently I shall stand to-morrow in a very aukward situation."

"As to the non-performance of your engagement, my dear," said my aunt, "I think that if you state the matter as it really is to this stranger, and say That your guardians, for *all must* have joined, had removed your monies from Mr. Smith's bank into other securities, and that you were ignorant of the circumstance, till I informed you of it, which occasions an unlooked-for delay, the person, whoever he is, will willingly wait 'till you have seen Sir William: if you think my presence can make this declaration less unpleasant to you, I will be in the room while you make it."

I begged my aunt would allow me time for composing my spirits, and reflecting on what was best to be done, and told her that the next morning I would acquaint her with my determination. I need not tell you, my dear Lady Jane, that our conversation was not particularly brilliant after this—little Charles, who had been invited to go and dine with a little friend of his, returned, and by his sweet prat-

ling gave some relief to our saddening reflections. When he was gone to bed, my aunt resumed the subject, and spoke with such enthusiastic warmth of my uncle's honor, that she entirely dispelled my doubts, and I reproached myself for having suffered the Banker's intelligence to have made so strong an impression upon my mind, as to create any apprehensions of Sir William's integrity.

I now retired to my apartment, but not to sleep. To manage this affair about the purchase was more than I knew how to encounter; the morning would so soon arrive, that there was not one moment to be lost in debate. I, therefore, determined, when Colonel Mollineux should call, to acquaint him candidly with my embarrassment, and my aunt's explanation of its cause. I also resolved, however vehemently he might press it, not to receive the parchment, until I had the money in my possession to discharge the debt: for this I could not name a time, as I knew not the certain period of my uncle's return.

I declined my aunt's offer of being with me during the interview, as, in the first place, I did not choose to receive her thanks for what I was doing—till it was done; and in the second, because I knew Lady Ellisborough would be more hurt at my suffering vexation on account of herself and her child, than on any other occasion.

When the morning came, I arose and made breakfast as usual; at the same time, I endeavoured to strengthen myself in the persuasion that all would be well, flattering myself that my candor with the Colonel would save me from every kind of mortification. I accordingly sat in readiness to receive him; but, just as the hour of appointment struck, a note was brought from him, to inform me, that he was unfortunately confined with a sore-throat, but that the agent would attend me at one o'clock, to put me in possession of the parchment, and to receive the payment. . . . . I am under the necessity of breaking off.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XVI.

The same to the same.

The Colonel's information, you may well suppose, Madam, hurried me not a little; indeed, it made me quite ill; but, as truth requires no preparation of thought, I immediately answered his note, saying: "I would esteem myself much obliged by Colonel Mollineux, if he would delay sending the parchment till Sir William Ellisborough's return, as I could not before then receive cash for the payment of my purchase." Just as the note had been dispatched, the agent came in: I repeated to him the nature of my reply to the Colonel, but I had cause to repent my politeness in seeing him, for he very rudely pressed me to name Monday—the next day—well, the day following; but all these appointments I absolutely declined, and at last told him, that I should conclude the transaction with

the Colonel *only*. This so highly offended him, that I believe it procured me the note which I subjoin.

"Colonel Mollineux presents his respectful compliments to Miss St. Helen, with a request that she will honor his draft with acceptance at eight and twenty days date, as it will answer the purpose of cash to him, and be more convenient to her, a consideration which affords him the greatest pleasure. Colonel Mollineux will take the earliest opportunity of making his apologies in person, for being thus troublesome to Miss St. Helen, but he received by this day's post a very unexpected demand, which he was obliged to answer."

This request perplexed me even more than all the other untoward circumstances together. The uncertainty of my being able to pay it when due made me resolve not to sign it. Agitated to the highest degree, I was traversing the room, when my aunt came to see after me. I had the note in my hand, which awakened so much affectionate curiosity in her,

that I hesitated no longer about giving her an explanation of the whole. She thanked me over and over for my kindness to her boy, and said a great many more things than such a transaction merited; but concluded with her distress and mortification at seeing me doubt her word and her husband's honor. "Ought I to sign it?" said I. "*If* my uncle should *not* return....." "Your *if*, my dear Julia," she quickly interrupted, "is the result of *another* suspicion, besides your doubting Sir William's *return*. How can you cherish such injurious ideas? Believe me, niece, no temptation, no distress in the world would induce my husband to appropriate one halfpenny of yours to his own use, unknown to you. Good God! how you wrong him! I flattered myself, that these unfounded suspicions had been dispelled last night, and that you had given credit to my assertions." She gave me a look of reproach, which cut me to the soul—I snatched up the pen, and signed the paper.

At the expiration of the week, my uncle returned to our lodging, and appeared so cheerful that we agreed not to mention the subject of our finances that night. My poor aunt was a prey to a hectic fever, which gave her cheeks so fine a flush, that her husband did not perceive the alteration for the worse which was so evident to me. Little Charles was playful, and we were all disposed to enjoy the evening—How uncertain is every thing in this life!—My aunt felt too grateful to me; when she beheld her boy on his father's knees, she could not restrain her feelings—her predetermined silence gave way, and she acquainted my uncle with my schemes—my provision for Charles—and my determination to make them all live with me, till it was thought convenient to separate. The kind of animation which appeared in her eyes convinced me that she enjoyed a luxury of thought little inferior to my own; but I could not leave it to her to explain my intentions—so, seizing his hand, I said: "Dearest uncle, consider Julia St.

Helen as your child, who is endeavouring to secure her own happiness by promoting yours. I owe you a thousand obligations, and I value my fortune only so far as it will enable me to make you a return." My aunt was grasping his other hand—At this instant, while her eyes were riveted on mine, a paleness overspread his countenance, and breaking from us both, he hid his face in his hands, and exclaimed: "Julia, Julia, I am a villain. You are ruined—I have made you a beggar—but you shall—you *shall* have vengeance." He instantly flew to the door—pushed it open with the greatest violence and left us almost annihilated. From that fatal hour till that which robbed me of my afflicted aunt, we never obtained any intelligence of him or from him; neither have his friends received any letter; though I have since known that he lives in America, where he has amassed some thousands, which the Banker, who so justly imagined my fortune was gone, even before I had the least suspicion about it, tells me he designs

for my use; not that he knows this from Sir William himself, but from an American gentleman now in town.

These anecdotes may be looked upon as conjectural, but they are also so well founded, that they amount to little less than positive proofs. This American describes his person exactly, and a remarkable blue vein which was across the bridge of his nose, his large hazel eyes and fine teeth, his height, every thing corresponds with my uncle's portrait. He passes by a fictitious name, but being on terms of intimacy with this man, he has often mentioned his leaving England to have been occasioned by a failure in his affairs; that he had been drawn in by designing people, to use the property of a young lady, his ward, promising to assist him at the time she should require it, if he was not prepared; that his wife was extremely delicate, and in a decline at the time he left her, and that he often spoke of his only child, whom he called by the name of Charles.

These circumstances remove every doubt,

even if I had not received two remittances of five hundred pounds each. But, with all my inquiries, I have never been able to trace the hands they came through: nor can the American tell me where Sir William is, as he quitted his own estate there, to settle in England, eighteen months after my uncle's arrival at New-York. The information respecting the money is anonymous. I was requested to carry the paper to the first clerk of the Bank, who would put me in the way of receiving five hundred pounds. I did so; but, as this clerk did not know my person, I was desired to bring two vouchers that I was Julia Ellisborough St. Helen. This was attended with great difficulties, as it happened at a time I was under your Ladyship's protection. At a very great expence, I brought up old nurse, and a tenant of my father's for this purpose, met them at the Bank, and obtained possession of my money. But to return to the disconsolate Lady Ellisborough, myself and Charles.

Instead of sitting down to our little supper of pigeons and asparagus, which his poor wife had ordered, as he was extremely fond of them—instead of enjoying our evening with that delight we had expected, we were overwhelmed with affliction. His abrupt departure had so much horror in it, that we were unable to move, or to stop him. We seemed both converted into marble—we could not speak—we stared wildly at each other, till the poor child, who was thunderstruck at being thus set on the ground by his father, besought his mamma to forgive him. His voice drew her from that state of stupefaction—she clasped him to her breast—but she neither shed a tear, nor uttered a word. She remained some time in this situation, till Charles asked her: "Mamma, will not papa come home to supper?" At this innocent question, she was seized with the most violent convulsions, succeeding each other so rapidly, that they seemed to threaten her dissolution—happy for her had she been thus released from her sorrows. All that

night and the following day, she continued in this wretched situation, but towards the evening, she regained some degree of composure. I persuaded her to swallow some tea, and endeavoured to enter into conversation about the child, but in vain. We however sat up till the watchman called out twelve, when I tried to induce her to lie down, which, after many fruitless attempts, and on my protesting that I would not leave her, she at last consented to do. The violence of our grief hindered us from closing our eyes; as the dawn advanced, she said, "She would give the world to go to Dover, for she knew he would embark on board some vessel for France—he was wretched, and therefore, no event whatever ought to divide her from him—were he happy, she could bear the separation; but being miserable, she *ought* she *would* be his consolation." She almost raved upon the subject. "Then, why not go?" said I; "I will attend you." She started up, hurried on her clothes, awakened the child, and was descending the stairs, even

before the chaise had been ordered. However, I lost no time, and within the hour, we were all on our way to Dover: but, for this purpose, as the idea of money never entered her poor bewildered head, I was obliged to part with my dear mother's watch, which I did through the interest of the maid, who got me twenty guineas for it, a sum presently spent in fruitless enquiries, for we could not hear any tidings of him. I now daily urged my aunt to return to town, but she seemed so certain of meeting with her husband, that I saw how much violence she did to her inclination when she at last named the day: but little did we think how impossible we should find it to perform the journey. Our dearest Charles was suddenly taken ill; an apothecary was sent for, who declared it to be the small pox, and that it was of a very malignant kind: the poor mother and I were never from him; but alas! all our efforts were vain . . . . . Let me pass over this scene.

This new calamity blunted the edge of our other misfortunes. Nothing less than religion could have supported us under such trials. Sweet little Charles! I loved thee too well ever to forget thee.... Memory now brings back the past, and hurries me almost as much as at the moment of affliction..... I must lay down the pen..... to-morrow, I will continue my narrative, and be then, as I am now, and always, my dear Lady Jane's obliged and affectionate.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XVII.

The same to the same.

WERE I to wait, my dear Lady Jane, till I found inclination to resume my sad narrative, you would for ever be disappointed

of its conclusion. I will hasten over the melancholy detail which follows, till the time when I shall be a deserted unfriended creature, and having nothing but anecdotes of my poor unfortunate self to relate. Free from guilt, they are at least, in the retrospect, unattended with remorse.

As soon as the funeral of her loved child was over, my aunt, worn down with affliction, felt as impatient as myself to quit Dover, a place in which she had experienced such a calamity. She never ceased upbraiding herself for taking this journey and abusing my patient, condescending friendship, while I sought to compose her, by repeating that her good intention in undertaking it ought to serve her as excuse—and even comfort. For my part, my bosom was the repository of the most sincere sorrow. I beheld my aunt expiring, as it were, by inches, and I was now reduced to the last resource of parting with my clothes, in order to procure her the comforts which her situation required. My uncle's baseness—my own engagement to

pay a draft for so large a sum, that even the bare possibility of doing it was out of the question—the certainty that the patent place could not be re-sold in time to save me from mortifications—and the new debt which the agency business of this transaction would create—were too many loads upon my mind. My health was greatly impaired, though, as you may well suppose, I had recourse to a thousand pious frauds, to deceive Lady Ellisborough in that respect.

Three weeks of the eight-and-twenty days were already elapsed; I relied upon heaven that the integrity of my actions would preserve me from unmerited distress, at the same time that I besought it to fortify my mind if they awaited me. My aunt bore her journey very ill, and indeed I was very little better myself; however, we arrived safe at the same lodgings we had quitted on going to Dover. With respect to the draft, there was no other alternative than to send for Colonel Mollineux, and acquaint him with the state of my affairs

without any disguise; for, all ridiculous apprehensions about his vanity, or his regard for me, were done away, as I knew him to be so much a man of the world, that he admired me more because it was the fashion to do so, being a rich heiress, than because he really loved me. Accordingly, I wrote a note, requesting to see him upon particular business. He immediately complied, entered into all my embarrassments as a friend, and when he heard of my total deprivation of fortune, he evinced the sensibility of his feelings by shedding some tears. Every offer of friendship and assistance was made me without any reserve. He promised to exert himself in re-selling the patent place, which, however, was always a work of time: but he added that I might rely upon his honor that the draft should not be presented to me for payment. With unfeigned sincerity of heart I thanked him for such real kindness; but he stopped me short, with saying: "You, my dearest Miss Ellisborough, have it in your power to repay me a thousand fold." This ambi-

guous speech caused me no small vexation; I thought a man of delicacy would have chosen any other moment than the one he had been conferring favors in, to have made this reply.

My aunt's illness was now drawing to a crisis. I parted with my father's watch, and whatever I had that was valuable, in order to procure advice and necessaries. Two physicians attended her, but they gave me no hope whatever that she could recover, though she might linger on for two or three months, but they did not think that she could live beyond that time. The measure of all my woes seemed now full . . . . I loved her with truly filial affection, and that love bid me suppress my griefs and distresses, for fear they should alarm and afflict her. She never complained, but, from the frequent changes in her countenance, I could easily perceive how much she suffered. I was continually with her; in the evening there was every symptom of change for the worse; there was a calm recollectedness in all she did or said,

and at the same time a *tender firmness*, which overset all my resolutions of suppressing my tears. She surveyed me with the most marked affection. "Julia, my beloved Julia," said she, "I endeavour to think my unfortunate husband did not design to kill me, when he so cruelly left me. The injury he had done you compelled him to fly his country; I humbly hope a due sense of his crime, and a heartfelt contrition will obtain pardon from a merciful God, into whose hands I commend him—you join me, my dear child, in praying God to forgive and bless him?" "Most fervently my dear aunt," I replied; "may God forgive him as unboundedly as I do. Believe me, aunt, if ever I have it in my power, I will convince him that I have a heart to forgive his errors?" She exclaimed, "Could he but know this—know that you would not carry your resentment to the grave!"

"How unfit should I be," replied I, "to descend there myself, were I to think and act otherwise! No, aunt, however he may

have been wrong, he is pardoned by me. My father's brother, your husband, shall never find a persecutor in his niece—nay, this is only negative—your husband shall always find a dutiful child in your Julia." "Then I shall die in peace," said she. "For this exertion of your virtue, my dear, the approbation of your own heart is no mean reward—but I now want your humanity to extend also to me—rejoice, my dearest Julia, at the release which is fast approaching. My obligations to you are so many—so impossible to be expressed, that I dare not attempt the subject . . . ." Her voice faultered, I took this opportunity to interrupt her, by saying: "Spare me, my dearest aunt, spare me—and yourself." "I will, my love," she replied—"with what rapture could I now quit the world, did I not leave you unprotected, but by innocence—unbefriended, but by heaven! . . . ."

"And with such protectors," interrupted I again, "my dear aunt, I trust I shall be able to steer my course, and after

a little time rejoin those I love . . . . ." my tears choaked further utterance.

"Did I," she resumed, "leave you in possession of your fortune, (O my God! forgive him!) of powerful and attached relations, I should not regret this separation; but my soul, anxious as it is to take its flight, is weighed down by the cruel presentiment of what awaits you. I have spent the little *you had*, I fear." "More conjecture," said I, "for pity's sake, do not exhaust yourself so, for I really cannot stand it."

"My child, I have just done—let my funeral cost you as little as possible—lay my remains in the parish-church, and let the poor carry me—To them it will be like a legacy to receive a little trifle, and you know that, even could I afford it, I detest ostentation at such a time." All this was delivered without agitation or tremor—it was not *heard* so. I thought my heart would burst—nature could bear no more . . . . .

Jannet, a maid who had attended me

for years, opened the chamber-door and beckoned me out. I was glad of any opportunity to give vent to my feelings, which having indulged a little, she told me, That two gentlemen were below to speak to me. I sent down a very civil message to inform them, That my aunt was extremely ill, and if they would excuse me, I should be obliged to them. She returned with a Mr. Montague's compliments, and his business was so urgent, that he must that very moment speak to me. Accordingly, I walked down stairs, and seeing two very ill-looking men, I was, from an involuntary motion, I believe, retiring to the other room, when they followed me and gave me a paper, which proved to be an arrest.—I only wonder, Madam, that I am still alive to tell you this, the shock was so violent—I heard the words: "You are my prisoner," and what became of me for some time I know not. At length, I said: "Only give me time to breathe—this is indeed unexpected"—"That's odd, however,"

said one of the men; "you knew tho', I warrant, that you had given a draft and not answered it."—"What! is this at Colonel Mollineux's suit? Impossible!"—"Not at all impossible, my dear; Colonels love money, or payment of some sort or another, as well as other people: but we have no time for chattering, you must come along with me to my house." "God forbid!" said I, "never!"—"If you don't go willingly, you must be made to go, that's all ma'm—take your choice—do which you please—it's all one to us." "Indeed, Sirs," said I, "there must be some great mistake: Colonel Mollineux gave me his word and honor that he would pay this note, if I was not ready—I am convinced he would do so—suffer me to send for him, and I will reward you amply for your patient waiting till the messenger's return—only let me send for him, I beseech you."—"Yes, yes, you shall send, but it shall be from my house; I cannot wait here all day; I have other folks to arrest; so, I say, come along, or

I'll make ye, as I told ye before."—"Let me call my maid—make no noise—I will make no resistance—but there is a person very ill within, and I must give directions about her."—"Well, give us something to eat and drink, and we'll stop a bit to oblige ye." One of them went, and came back with Jannet, who also brought provisions for them.

When Jannet saw my distress, she exclaimed: "Lord ha' mercy upon us! sure these are bailiffs!" "Hush! hush! for God's sake," said I, "consider my aunt."—"Oh dear! oh dear! what will become of us?"—"Only be quiet, Jannet, and hear me."—"Never, never will I leave you, my dear lady . . . . . O Lord, O Lord! what shall I do?"—"Pray, be quiet, pray be gentle, you will alarm my aunt"—"I shall break my heart."—"Be peaceable, Jannet, for shame! be composed, and attend to me."—"Yes, and *on* you, too, Madam, for I won't stay here; I'll follow you to the world's end, that I will."—"Oh! unkind Jannet, can you distress me so

cruelly? I thought you loved me."—"Yes, God knows I do."—"Then, only hear me; if you really love me, *now* is the time to prove it. I conjure you, take care of my aunt; I beseech you never to quit her; God will take good care of me, Jannet; I will send to Colonel Mollineux, and be home again presently—exert yourself like a good girl—here is a guinea, pray read the labels on every phial—that which she is taking has a superscription. These good-natured people will let me show you how to mix it up.

The messenger returned—the Colonel could not be found—After a minute's silence, I said: "I am ready to go in a hackney-coach." "Aye," replied one of the men, "but you must tramp on, till we meet with one, for I'll stay no longer—I have dawdled away a precious half hour already."—"For heaven's sake, spare me the shame of being seen publicly in the street, under such circumstances—indeed, indeed, I cannot walk."—"Then, we'll lead you, that's all," and taking hold of

my arm, they forcibly hurried me along the passage; but yet, I found time to say: "Jannet, now I am obliged to you, for I am certain you will take care of my aunt—for heaven's sake, don't tell her—invent some excuse for my absence—any thing probable—be not uneasy, if I do not come back, though I trust in God I shall soon—" So saying, my conductors pulled me over the threshold—and my overcharged heart said: "Father of mercy, thy will be done!"

Fortunately, a chair stood at the end of the street, and as one of the men wanted to go somewhere else, he proposed to the other to *stuff* me in, as one was sufficient to take care of me. This being done, I was carried to a house, where I was received by a woman and shown into a room with barred windows. My conductress soon disappeared, and turned the key on the outside of the door. This was about one o'clock in the afternoon, and at five the same woman came to ask me what I would have to eat. She found me sitting in the

same posture she had left me in, for I had never stirred from my chair. She enumerated all the delicacies of her larder, but I told her I could eat nothing:—"Eat nothing!"—"No, I cannot eat here—I have no appetite." "Aye, aye," said she, "you'll change your tone soon;—you'll be hungry enough before you're liberated—folks don't gets *out* so fast as they comes *in* to these genteel houses, which are above the vulgar sort, I can tell you—" Away she went, and a torrent of tears happily relieved my full heart.

As it grew dark, a young woman of about eighteen unlocked the door, and made her appearance, to ask me, whether I would have a candle. I said "Yes, and also that I would be glad of tea." "I came up," she replied, "with my mamma's compliments, and as you seem so doleful, she thinks you had better come and take a game at cards with her, and uncle Joe, and me, ma'm. We are as merry as griggs below, and it would be better to share our fun than sit here moping by your-

self." "Young woman," I answered, "I would prefer my own apartment, with a book, if you can lend me one, to any other place; tell your mother I beg to have tea up stairs directly." She promised to look for a book—"since I was so melancholy, I *must* read," and then turned the key upon me as before, when I heard her say to somebody: "Handsome! she looks for all the world like a kept madam."—"Then she's handsome enough to be kept madam to a Duke," answered another voice. "I say, if she was my property, I'd make money of her." In a few minutes, she returned with tea—and Thomson's Seasons, the only book in the world most fitted for me at that moment. It was sadly torn, and several leaves pinned in: one that was loose dropped on the floor, and picking it up, my eyes met with the following lines, so applicable to the situation of my aunt, my uncle and myself,

Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste:
Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel this very moment, *death*
And all the *sad variety of pain*.
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame. How many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt Man and Man.
How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;
Shut from the common air, and common use
Of their own limbs. How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierc'd by wint'ry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty. How many shake
With all the *fiercer tortures of the mind,*
Unbounded passion, madness, *guilt, remorse;*
Whence, *tumbled headlong from the height of life,*
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.
Even in the vale, where wisdom loves to dwell,
With friendship, peace, and contemplation join'd,
How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop
In deep retir'd distress. *How many stand*
Around the death-bed of their dearest friends
And point the parting anguish . . . . .

a sad duty denied to the afflicted Julia.

My aunt wholly occupied my thoughts; if worlds could have purchased my liberty at such a moment, I believe I had given them, if in my power. By a very wretched taper, I wrote to Colonel Mollineux; for, till ten at night, I had not power to do it; I even forgot to drink my tea, though I had made it so long, and nothing but an extreme faintness could have reminded me of it. At length my finished note was dispatched: it desired the Colonel to call in the morning, and I dated it "From a spunging-house." In little more than an hour, word was brought that he was gone for a few days into Hampshire. I heard this news almost without emotion—the agitation of the day had been so extreme, that all my faculties were now benumbed. I did not cry—I could not read—I prayed for resignation—but I was conscious it was more a stupor over my senses than the effect of humble submission. I was mortified at the conviction—and this roused me from my lethargic state. Throwing

myself on my knees, I implored the divine protection, with a fervor which calmed my troubled soul, because I trusted it would not be denied me.

I never slept during the night, which I passed upon a chair. I suffered tortures on my aunt's account. I wrote to Jannet twice a day, and as often received her answers. She gave some relief to my distress by informing me the dear woman believed I was with Mrs. James, and often said, "She was sure she must be very ill, or kind Julia would not leave her so long." Jannet sent me some linen, and a bottle of wine, which really supported me; for, besides hard biscuit and tea, it was the only thing I could prevail upon myself to taste.

At one o'clock on the fourth day, the door was unlocked, and Colonel Mollineux came in. He took me by the hand—he tried to speak, but could not—I was pale and emaciated to a degree—He stared at me wildly—seemed greatly distressed—and looked very ill. Speech was also denied me—tears choaked my utterance. At

last, I said to him: "This is a strange place, Colonel, for me to receive you in." He again seized my hand—"My crime, Madam . . . . . Can I ever expiate my crime?—will these tears wash away the involuntary pangs I have given you?—no, my life would be too little to attone for it."—"It is past, Sir," said I, "and cannot be recalled—but the stroke was unexpected."—"Hear me, thou suffering angel, hear me call heaven to witness the truth of what I say. I had taken every precaution to spare you one moment's anxiety; I myself called on my attorney, who transacts all my private money affairs, to bid him pay the note, when brought to him, having previously ordered my servant to accompany the holder of it to his chambers. Not finding him at home, I wrote a letter, and put it into the hands of his clerk myself—but he never delivered it. I was with a large party at my house in Hampshire, when I received your note, dated from this execrable place. I instantly ordered my chaise, and have

travelled all night, in order to remove you from such an infernal abode. My anxiety is not inferior to yours—God only knows what I have suffered."

I thanked him, and said that, "Even before I had heard his vindication, I had perfectly acquitted him in my own mind of every thing but negligence, else, I should not have written to him; but that now, I acquitted him of that also, and felt a real obligation for his goodness to me." He rang the bell, and ordered all the charges to be brought up, that I might instantly be removed—All this while, I sat quite inanimate—He ordered two chairs, and having paid an exorbitant bill for the room, fire, candle, &c. he opened the door and handed me down stairs, while my heart was secretly returning thanks to heaven and him. When I was seated in the chair, I drew the curtains, and thought the way a thousand times longer than when I took the same road four days before. When the chair stopped, fear, hope and joy almost convulsed me. My tears flowed

afresh—I held my handkerchief to my eyes, while the Colonel handed me, as I thought, into my own dressing-room, when, upon lifting up my eyes, I was astonished to behold *his* picture, and to find myself at his apartments, in Bury-Street, St. James's. "My God!" I exclaimed; "how comes this? I thought I was at home—this is quite improper—let me be gone—I hope the chair waits—I must see my aunt." "Yes, so you shall," said he, "after you have taken some refreshment."—"I cannot, Sir, I cannot."—"But I have ordered tea and chocolate; they will be here instantly, and then I will conduct you."—Indeed, Colonel, I cannot take any thing—the impropriety of being at your lodgings gives me pain."—"Are you afraid of me, madam?"—"No, Sir; I should be humbled indeed, were I to suppose I could have any thing to fear; but would you think a similar situation proper for your sister? For God's sake! lose no time—I am nothing short of wretched while I am here—

let me ring—" which I did while I spoke, though he had stood before me the whole time, to prevent my getting to the door. I saw him vexed to the soul, but what were my sensations, on seeing the servant usher in two visitors, the Duke of —— and the honourable George T. ! I was thunderstruck, confounded — they both knew me well; the latter had indeed paid me the most marked attentions. "Gentlemen," said the Colonel, "your visit is rather mal-à-propos; another time, I shall be glad to see you." "Faith, Colonel," said the Duke, "you are in the right; when Miss St. Helen does *me* the honor to breakfast at my house, I will not admit you, I assure you." "For pity's sake! Colonel, explain," said I—"Stop, my Lord, I do assure you my being here is quite accidental."—"Lord bless me, Madam, I am sure I don't doubt it.—"Oh dear, Madam," said the other, "certainly." "On my life, it is," repeated I; "Do, pray, Colonel, explain." "Madam," said the Duke, "I shall expect a

challenge, if I interrupt longer a tête-à-tête which a monarch might envy the Colonel." Upon which, out they both went, the Duke turning the key of the door on the outside, while he called out to the Colonel to thank him for his good-nature. I wrung my hands in an agony of despair, and catching hold of the bell-string, pulled it incessantly, till the servant entered the room. "Sir," said I, "pray, order my chair—Colonel, my reputation is all I possess in the world; it is not to be trifled with, and I insist upon going instantly." So saying, I walked to the door, when he attended me down stairs. The chair was in waiting—I got into it, and the Colonel walked by the side. When he handed me out, he said, "He was much hurt at my manifest want of confidence in him—he had hoped his services had purchased my esteem, though I had determined to withhold my regard—he had deceived himself in supposing my justice would overcome my prejudice—a meritorious action

in another person, was only *not a crime* in him."

Hurt to the soul, I answered: "Try to deserve my regard, Colonel, and rest assured I am too just to withhold it. This morning, at twelve o'clock, you had laid me under the greatest and most real obligation to you—at one, that obligation was cancelled by your want of regard to my reputation—'tis all I am now worth—." I wished him good morning, and said, "I should be happy to pay him the next day the debts I had incurred, but was too impatient to see my aunt to discharge them now"—he kissed my hand and left me. I instantly mounted up stairs to my aunt's chamber, where I beheld her enjoying a sweet sleep—She really looked angelic; her beauty was heightened by a most beautiful flush, and she smiled so benignly, that I stood gazing on her with admiration—and taking up my pencil, sketched her features extremely like. I then took my seat in the arm-chair, and in a copious flood of tears,

offered up my unfeigned thanks to the Father of Mercies for his goodness to me, in bringing me back in safety to close her eyes. After a good hour's doze, my aunt awoke, and as I was fearful lest my sudden appearance should hurry her, I spoke in Jannet's voice, behind the curtain, and said: "Miss St. Helen means to come back to-day, my Lady." "God be praised!" said she; "I long for the moment." "Do you?" said I, showing myself; "not more than I do." I embraced her, and concealed from her the sad cause of my absence. She enquired after our landlady, Mrs. James, and in order to carry on the deception, I was obliged to say: "She has had a fine boy, but was not delivered till this morning, though she has been ill so long." This deviation from my rule of always speaking the truth was for her peace of mind, she being in fact the primary cause of all my sufferings, by urging me to sign the draft. Indeed, nothing but the look of reproach she gave me at the time could have made me do what

I had firmly resolved *not* to do—but such look was more forcible than any language could possibly have been.

I now resolved to take care of myself, that I might be able to attend her; but poor Jannet was worn out with fatigue; in the evening, therefore, I sent her to bed, and took my place in the great chair. I got little sleep, but my aunt had a charming night, and I was quite elated at seeing her so much better to all appearance. She eat her breakfast, as if she liked it, and said a thousand endearing things to me, which remain treasured up in my heart, Lady Jane, beyond the power of treacherous memory to efface.

Seeing the newspaper lying on the table, she told me, she should be amused if I would read it to her. I instantly took it up, and read three or four paragraphs, one of which she heartily laughed at, when one presented itself to my view, which almost killed me. "My God, my God!" cried I—and fainted away. My poor aunt, as Jannet afterwards told me, all feeble as

she was, got out of bed, rang the bell, and held hartshorn to my nose. Jannet coming up, they both tried to recover me, but in vain, till throwing up the sash, the girl cried out: "For God's sake, do somebody send for a surgeon." One came presently, who breathed a vein, which had an immediate effect—I returned to life and misery. As I regained my sense, I repeated continually: "This is too much, this is too much." "What is too much, my dearest girl?" said my aunt.—"Oh! it is indeed too much—I cannot support it." She then took up the paper, to find out the cause of my distress, and having read the paragraph, did all she could to persuade me that it was meant for any other person but *me*. I however knew better—I *had been* there—the paragraph was as follows:

"If the beautiful all-accomplished
"daughter of a certain Sussex Baronet,
"and the niece of a notorious defaulting
"Baronet, who recently absconded, were
"a little more circumspect in her visits

" to the handsome Colonel of Bury-Street,
" she would promote her own interest,
" as the *semblance* of modesty, even with-
" out the *substance*, is always alluring."

When I went on with the repetition of "This is too much," my aunt leaned far out of her bed to take hold of my hand, and said: "Dearest Julia, my child, why should you afflict yourself? you never were at Colonel Mollineux's in your life; therefore, my dear, it cannot be aimed at *you*. You hurry my spirits, my beloved girl—be composed, I conjure you." "Alas, alas! aunt, never, no, never can I be happy again."—"Innocence, my dear, will be the means of making you happy under greater trials than any you have experienced—there are still, I trust, many happy hours in store for my beloved Julia—Jannet, console your mistress, for I am fatigued." Those last words had their instant effect. I was almost ashamed that I *could* feel for myself at such a moment. "Pardon, my dearest aunt," cried I; "I am myself again; I will not distress you."

She pressed my hand, and fell again into a gentle sleep, which continued for five hours. I grew uneasy and sent for the physician—he came, and prepared me for a final separation from the only person who felt any interest for me.... Too selfish idea!—yet, in spite of myself, it had a share in my sorrow—my heart upbraided me for my unkindness to her, in lamenting her loss—but nature is ever faithful to her charge—Fainting fits now came on in rapid succession; at five o'clock in the morning, I received her last blessing—her last look—her last breath———.
In the agony of my soul, I prayed for my last hour, but I instantly reproved myself for doing so.

I have already gone beyond my strength, and have only power to say that I ever am, my dear Lady Jane's,

Most obliged and affectionate

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XVIII.

The same to the same.

After a few hours of unfeigned affliction, I summoned all my powers to act as circumstances required. I had no sympathising friend to assist me in the last sad offices to my departed aunt. The inhuman paragraph of the morning deprived me of the assistance I should otherwise have sought. Jannet was too ignorant to be of real comfort to me, though her affectionate friendship was an alleviation to my sufferings. I ordered a very plain, but decent, funeral, and deposited her remains in the parish-church.

This melancholy business over, I got together every article that could be converted into money, and informed Jannet that I could no longer afford to keep a servant, advising her at the same time to look out for a place. She answered, that "She

was preparing to speak to me upon that very subject, though it afflicted her much to be obliged to leave me. She had already been married six months, unknown to me, and her husband wished her to go into Yorkshire, as laundry-maid to the family where he lived as coachman." Had she been going to a house of her own, I would have asked her to board and lodge me for a short time, as I was extremely ill, and some few months residence in the country would have been of great service.

Jannet disposed of my little wardrobe for forty-nine pounds. Three guineas and some silver were due to Colonel Mollineux for the spunging-house fees—all my debts discharged, I had twenty-five pounds remaining! Whither should I now go? I knew not—yet, I must depart the house I was in—it was therefore necessary that I should come to some determination. In the midst of my perplexity, I recollected that my nurse, Mary Thomas, had a neat little cottage, only five miles distant from

my dear father's park. As many years had elapsed since she had seen me, during which time I was much grown, and perhaps much altered, I trusted I might live there undiscovered, and even get some needle-work, by which I might be able to maintain myself. This party appeared so eligible, that I instantly wrote to ask her whether she could make it convenient to receive me for a few months, as my health was much impaired, and I thought my native air would prove beneficial in restoring it. I concluded with an earnest request not to mention my intention, for reasons I would explain when we met, as I was now in a situation very different from the one she had seen me in.

The third day brought me her answer, which was expressive of much joy at the prospect of seeing dear Sir John St. Helen's daughter. I, therefore, determined to lose no time, but, previously to my departure, see Colonel Mollineux, and reimburse him all his expences. My note mentioned my design of leaving town, and my wish of

seeing him first. The black seal informed him of my loss, which he kindly reproached me for concealing from him, saying: "He had a kind of right, from having known me so long, to be considered as a friend, and consequently to share in whatever gave me pain."

I told him, "That I had indeed designed to have requested the favor of seeing him the day before my irreparable loss, but that he was saved the trouble of a visit by the unmerited attack upon my character, which appeared in the newspaper—a circumstance which had put it out of my power to apply to the *only* person whom I could call my friend. The affliction it had caused me was lost in a greater; but as I had, though involuntarily, given occasion to the scandal, I must submit to it." "That look," said he, "that look of reproach, Miss St. Helen, has had the effect you intended. With sincere concern do I reflect upon the agitation you suffered. I call heaven to witness that every thing I did was with the purest intention: nor did

the impropriety of the step strike me, until you put it so forcibly to me. I had not planned it previously; nor had I the least idea of it, till I was in the chair, following you from Chancery-Lane, when I stopped my chairmen, and ordered them to go before yours and lead on to Bury-Street. I saw you looking extremely ill, and thought some refreshment would make you better; but as God is my judge, it never once occurred to me that I was acting improperly. I now think very differently—from my soul I ask your pardon—do you acquit me of every wrong intention?"

—"I certainly do: I should be ungrateful not to thank you for the *motive*, notwithstanding I must ever lament the *act*. I suppose I am obliged to one of the gentlemen that visited you, for a paragraph that has injured my repose for ever."—"No, Madam; I was proceeding to vindicate them in your opinion. When I had read the infamous article, I called instantly upon the Duke, with whom I also found

George T——, and insisted upon knowing which of the two had penned the paragraph. They both positively denied having any concern in it, and declared they were amazed at it when it met their eyes. Indeed they had been talking of little else, and believed they had traced it to its source, as they were imprudent enough, in the height of their fun, to talk before their servant of the interruption they had just given me. The Duke has dismissed this dangerous retailer of private conversation."

"Did you, Colonel," said I, "do me justice, by exposing my wants, as the only means of preserving my reputation? If you have not done it, let me entreat you to make this your first business after you leave me—there is no shame in poverty, except in not bearing up under it." He assured me, That he had cleared me from every suspicion by a most solemn voluntary oath, and that his friends knew him too well to believe he would do it to a falsehood.

"Well, but Colonel," said I, "I am

anxious to know how you have succeeded about the patent place—is it re-sold?" "No," answered he, "I now find that twelve hundred pounds, instead of eighteen, is the highest price it is likely to fetch; to me the loss is but a trifle—when you are very rich, you shall pay me—till then, I shall not require it." "Indeed," said I, "I was born to be very unfortunate"—"And I," he replied, "to be very lucky, since it obliges my dear Julia St. Helen to behold me in the light of a sincere friend." "Well," said I, "there is however, one debt which I *can* discharge—what you paid for me at leaving Chancery-lane." He almost quarrelled with me for forcing this upon him, but I would not be refused.—

"Your note, my charming friend," said he, "gives me much concern. It mentions your leaving town very soon; for how long?" "For good, Sir: having lost every inducement I had for staying, I am now very anxious indeed for quitting it. I have no connexions here, nor indeed

any where else, to tie me to one particular spot. I must turn my thoughts to some new mode of life, that may maintain me, and I give the preference to the country, because I am so well known here in the higher circles, that I should be liable to daily humiliations, which I seek to avoid. My uncle's former style of living procured him a numerous fashionable acquaintance; but acquaintance and friends have very different meanings."

—"Just now, Madam, you honored me with an appellation, which it will be my happiness to merit—*your only friend.* Confer upon me that favor, which I now not only ask, but beseech, entreat—Allow me to furnish you with the trifling sum of two hundred a year, out of my superabundance, till such time as you change your condition, and ever after, if it can promote your felicity."—"To thank you as gratefully as I feel, Sir, is impossible. At the same time that I am sensible of my obligation to you for so truly generous an offer. I am unable to accept it—it is quite

impossible."—"Unkind Miss St. Helen! is this the return you make to my affection."—"Affection, Sir! To such a term I own I am at a loss for a reply—Obligation and friendship are what I feel for Colonel Mollineux."—"But affection you deny him."—"How can I deny what was never seriously solicited?—but stop one instant, and hear me declare, That no persuasion in the world could overcome my scruples in this respect. Distress shall never tempt me to meanness or impropriety. My happiness consists in avowing obligations. I should blush at myself, were I to conceal this, and I *ought* to blush, were I to own it. I am able to maintain myself by fine works, drawings, &c, and therefore, never will submit to receive support from another, or contract a debt it may never be in my power to repay.

"By heaven," he exclaimed, "you shall not—those fingers are too delicate, that frame too fragile, to struggle with adversity. O Julia, Julia! I admired you, when all the world followed you, as beautiful,

rich and accomplished. I loved you as the supporter and protector of the very people who had injured you; but I adore you as one rising superior to misfortune, and being . . . ."—" Only what I ought to be. Resigned to my lot, Sir—without guilt—very little fortitude is required to bear up under pecuniary trials which affect none but myself. I will be candid enough to own that I cannot feel pleasure in rejecting the hand of any man who honors me with his regard. On the contrary, as a proof of my obligation to him for the preference, I would spare him the mortification of a refusal."

—" I am not to learn, Madam, that you possess every exalted sentiment in a superior degree—you are above triumph—myself and fortune are at your disposal."

" —Recal that sentence, Colonel; for fear you should proceed, I give you previous warning. My heart is a stranger to that attachment which is to bias me in the disposal of my hand. Had it been in my nature to have loved you, I had long ago made my choice, as gratitude gave me so many op-

portunities of discovering it to myself—for, I have no prepossession to combat."

—" Heaven be praised! *that* was my only dread—allow me to hope that time, and my affection, may create a change."

—" By no means, Colonel; there is an insuperable bar; I have a thousand reasons. Were I to love you, I must be wretched, for I never could accept you. But, setting aside the greatest obstacle of all, could I suffer the man I loved to think that I married him for convenience? Not feeling a particular partiality for you, I should despise myself, could any necessity compel me to deceive you into a belief that I did—either way, it would be impossible."

—" These may be reasons, Madam, but I see they are not the insurmountable ones you alluded to—let me know, that I may combat them."

—" Impossible; they are six in number—I beg to be excused, Sir; I am above trifling upon so serious an occasion—let us wave the subject."

—" Not till your usual candor unravels

the mystery—I am at a loss to guess what they are. I beseech you, keep me not in suspence—what are they?"

—"Your five children, Sir, and their unfortunate mother. What happiness could I expect, when I knew I made so many miserable?"

—"If the having had an engagement of this nature on my hands determines your answer, I hope you are aware that you must ever live single—Custom must plead my apology with the most rigid."

"Pardon me, Sir; you misunderstand me—It is not the having had the mistress, but the leaving the mother of your five children that I *now* disapprove. I know not the temptations that lay in *her* way, or *yours*; consequently, I am not a competent judge whether *she* was the victim of your art, or *you* of hers. I am a stranger to the unfortunate woman's story—I do not wish to know it—but whether it is one that excites my pity or contempt, still she is the parent of your five children. Could you

then make her so cruel, so inhuman a return as to desert her?"

—"I will, Madam, settle handsomely upon her—when the boys are of a proper age, I will provide for them also—the girls may live with their mother. I propose sending her to Wales, or Devonshire, or any other distant part, that you may be perfectly certain that all intercourse between us is at an end."

—"When I am once persuaded that a large fortune, abundance of jewels, and a splendid retinue will make me forget to appeal to my own conscience, which would reproach me incessantly for alienating your affections from *one*, who, in all probability, became contemptible to make you happy, from five unoffending babes, who look up to you for support and protection, then I will say, *Receive my hand:* but, while I can distinguish right from wrong, I must repeat, That *I never can be yours.* Nevertheless, my obligations to you are deeply engraved in my heart; your happiness will

always be dear to me, and I shall seek every opportunity of proving how grateful I am for your truly liberal offers."

—" Where shall I place the annuity, Miss St. Helen? to refuse that would be giving me a proof, that while your tongue pronounced me your friend, your heart conceived me to be an enemy—a dangerous person, whom you ought to avoid."

—" You have an ingenious way, Sir, of painting in strong colours. I certainly decline your offer, but it is from a very different motive. Pride, Sir, will not let me receive a favor from you, which I should scruple to acknowledge. But had I, at any time, entertained a different sentiment upon this subject, the paragraph which unfortunately appeared in the paper would make me liable to ill-natured animadversions, and consequently induces me to reject it. However, to convince you, Colonel, that I do not look upon you as an enemy, or as a man that ought not to be trusted, I voluntarily promise you, that should any unforeseen event distress me

for money, I will apply to you for assistance, in preference to any creature breathing. Will this satisfy you?"

—"Amiable girl! I understand you, and know you sufficiently to rest assured that you have determined no unforeseen event *shall* offer. You kindly mean to soothe those wounds you will not heal. Heaven protect you, my charming friend, and make you as happy as you deserve. Deny me not the consolation to know where you are to be found."

—"I will write my direction, and place it in the music-books I am to return to you. Will you send your servant for them some time in the evening? And now, Sir, for the last time, receive my farewel wishes for your health and happiness." With much emotion, he replied: "God bless you, my dear Miss St. Helen! may you be as happy as you have made me miserable. Farewel, amiable and lovely woman—farewel!"

When he was gone, I set about packing up my few remaining things; the place

was taken, and at nine in the morning I was to depart. I called Jannet, to receive the little trifle that was due to her, when I also gave her the Colonel's music-books, and my direction in *Kent*, which I bid her tell his servant to take particular care of. She looked, first at it—then at me—then again at the direction, in so odd a manner, that I imagined she did not understand the message properly. "Indeed, Ma'm," said she, "you must pardon me for what I am going to say—some folks are so ill-natured, that one had best be cautious. I know, ma'm, how false every thing that is said *is*, but it hurts me so. ,"—"What, Jannet? I do not understand you—tell me quickly what you mean."—"Why, ma'm, I am certain you don't deserve what is said of you—but the people of the public-house told me, That you was no better than you should be; that the papers had something about you and Colonel Mollineux; and yesterday, dared you to come forward, and clear yourself, if you was innocent; and abused poor

Lady Ellisborough, for living on the wages of infamy. I thought, my dear young lady, that I should have choaked with passion. I had best not give your direction—shall I?"

Jannet was in no danger of being interrupted, for I could hardly draw my breath. I heard distinctly, but was above vindication. My face instantly struck out in a violent rash, which turned to St. Anthony's fire. I could not command a tear—had no settled thought—could not form a single sentence. Jannet threw cold water upon me, which brought me to myself, when clasping my hands together, I exclaimed: "My God! Thy will be done!"—and with hurried steps traversed the room, while I bid the girl *burn the direction and only deliver the books.*

This is a very large packet, my dear Lady Jane, but the rain has been so incessant for the last two days, that I could not walk so far as the post-house, and I did not like to trust it into another's hands. Nurse is gone out to-day, in the good rec-

tor's carriage, for an airing. He is a very benevolent man, quite the father of his little community: but his wife is so proud a dame, that she seldom takes notice of my goody. Once, she did me the honor to say: "Young woman, you look ill, what ails you?"—and as I was going to reply, she asked her coachman, "Whether Poppet had been bled?"

Many thanks, Madam, for your kind letter. Sincerely do I wish Lady Charlotte joy, and long to see the dear little stranger.

I always am, &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XIX.

The same to the same.

After a solitary journey of thirty-three miles, during which I freely indulged my tears, I arrived at the place of my destination, and was received by poor nurse with a most cordial welcome. I felt so extremely fatigued that I told her I should like to have a bason of tea in bed, when pulling off my cap at the looking-glass, I was shocked to see my face as red as scarlet; St. Anthony's fire was then at its height: the cold water which Jannet had thrown in my face the evening before, had repelled it for the moment, but the heat of the journey brought it out again. When I expressed my astonishment at my frightful appearance, nurse exclaimed: "God be thanked, my dear Lady! I thought you was just come out of the small-pox, and I never had it in my life; but I would not

vex you by saying so, for fear you should go, when you stand in need of care to set you well again. Go now to bed as quick as possible—you shall want for nothing." As night approached, I grew very ill; so much so, that nurse thought I was in danger, and lost no time in sending for the apothecary. He came, looked at me, felt my pulse, advised me to keep cool and take a medicine he should send at night: then turning to nurse, added that he would call again in two or three days. He justly conceived that a lodger at nurse Thomas's was not likely to pay him well for attendance, and he was treating me accordingly; but my kind hostess loved Sir John Ellisborough St. Helen too sincerely, to suffer the life of his child to run any risk, and therefore, unknown to me, and swearing him to secrecy, she told him who I was. He immediately returned to my room with his conductress, asked me twenty questions about my constitution, and called me "Madam," instead of "My dear." For three weeks did he attend me con-

stantly, while I was secretly pleased at his humane treatment of a person who was apparently unable to pay him his bill.

I had cause to lament poor nurse's confidence in him; for, that very evening, he called at every house in the place, to communicate such an interesting piece of intelligence to his acquaintance. "See," said he, "the vicissitudes of life: a dozen or fourteen years ago, this noble family had all the luxuries fashion could create, or fortune purchase. The daughter was to have a plumb, for what I know, and I question whether a prince of the blood had been good enough for her. I heard that she was looked upon as a miracle; but if her accomplishments only keep pace with her beauty, I am sure she is no *wonder*. In my opinion, she must be very plain, even when she is well. She was a-bed, so I can say nothing of her person—though by her hand, I should guess her to be a fine lady without a sixpence. Oh! she is a finical piece of goods, if she is Lady Julia St. Helen's child. Her mother never

would visit Mrs. Galen, though I am certain we sent her, at various times, twenty invitations to cards. My good friend, her uncle, Sir William, owes me nine pounds seven shillings to this blessed day, for attendance on his servant—but I warrant I never shall finger one penny of it."

The disgrace of a distinguished family is, to little contracted minds, a subject of self-gratification; they rise in proportion as the other falls. Competition ceases, and as Gray says: "A dead Lord only ranks with a living Commoner." Our misfortunes were revived; every one became judge and jury upon the actions of father, mother, uncle and aunt, and included *me* also in their censures—not one escaped the malignity of their scandal. Every speaker prefaced his story with that *unanswerable* argument: "To my own knowledge." One said, "Sir John was only his own enemy; he had dipped his estate several thousands." "But then, no wonder," said another; "Lady Julia St. Helen was the most

extravagant woman that ever breathed; a lady told *me*, whose veracity I can depend upon, that she gamed very high, the winter after her marriage. She gave five hundred pounds for a suit of point, and insisted upon having the fine family-jewels re-set, though Sir John went down on his knees to beg that she would not." "The anecdote of the point-lace is new to me," said a third, "but I am well informed that she betted away *thousands*."

You will wonder, Lady Jane, how I came by this strange conversation; I will tell you, before I close this packet. It hurt me, and I sickened at the injustice of the world; for, this inestimable woman never gamed, never re-set the family-jewels, which had belonged to her husband's mother: nor was she ever in London, during the eleven months she was my father's wife. How depraved must that heart be, that can invent such falsehoods! In my opinion, no sort of cowardice can equal this. Every thing that my aunt had done

was also *proved* by these knowing-ones to have had a bad motive. She was always involved in the guilt of her husband.

Upon the apothecary's information, That I was to be seen (for, many came for no other purpose), I was visited by several very elegant people, who recollected me, when a child at my father's, and expressed much regard for my family. I constantly went out every day, for the benefit of the air, and those who were eager to show me their kindness used to try who should be first in prevailing upon me to spend the day with them; and when I was well enough to accept of these invitations, I passed my time not unpleasantly, as I aimed at being cheerful and forgetting my situation. I played, I sung, and I may say, without vanity, that I gave others more real pleasure than I received myself.

Thus passed near three months, in which time I completed a very beautiful artificial trimming, which I meant to dispose of against the Queen's birthday, with a view of making some recompence to Mary

Thomas. I was putting it into the band-box, when Lady Boon and her two youngest daughters called to return a little book of drawings which I had lent them. They admired the trimming *amasingly*, and lamented that Miss Jane Boon did not see it also. I directly insisted on her ladyship taking it home in the carriage, adding that I intended to part with it for the benefit of my poor nurse. On the following day, Sunday, she stopped at the cottage, in her way to the church, and told me, "She had not brought the trimming back, as she had found a purchaser for it. The flowers were *very tidily tacked together*, and she had persuaded her daughter to take and wear it at St. James's, *purely* to bring my abilities in the flower way into notice." "Madam," said I astonished, "your ladyship has misunderstood me; I design to present it first to nurse, who must set her own value upon it." "Oh!" said she, "we can easily reckon up the materials, and I doubt not she will be well contented with Miss Boon's estimation of it." "Se-

riously speaking, Lady Boon," answered I, "I must request to have it sent back,"—"Nonsense, my dear! I see you are afraid Miss Boon should ruin herself; we must settle it by-and-by. I have not a moment to spare, so good day to you"—and off she drove. In the evening, her maid called upon nurse, with *two guineas* from her lady, who kept the trimming in order to serve *her*. I wrote a note of remonstrance, which she never condescended to answer. This mean character ever after avoided me.

At the expiration of three months, I ceased to be a novelty. From taking me out to spend the day, it dwindled into tea-drinking—from *that* to an enquiry after my health, *en paſſant*—from *that* again to "Whether Miss Julia St. Helen turned her thoughts to any business?"—and the next question was "Whether Julia St. Helen had got a service?" I was weak enough at first to be vexed, but a little reflection made me soon despise those *great* people

for being so exquisitely *little.* Could I regret the loss of such acquaintance?

My abode now became very unpleasant: the gentlemen of every family were as attentive to me as ever, but the ladies were less communicative, when I happened to meet them, and I was sensible of a reserve which got the better of my spirits. I asked myself whether I had done any thing wrong, but of this I instantly stood acquitted in my own mind. I applied to nurse for an explanation of this mystery; her reply was: "My dear Miss St. Helen, you are too handsome to have many friends. Lady Boon sent for me last night and asked me, What you meant to do, as she did not like to see you come to ruin." I answered, To continue under my humble roof, till you had a better of your own. She reprimanded me for encouraging you to be idle, and said, You had a pretty knack at creating differences in families—and sure enough, her Ladyship has sent her son post-haste to Oxford.

"Nay," said she, "I have just got a pretty account of Miss Julia's goings-on in London, where I find she was quite the town-talk." God forgive me, Miss, I could not feel any respect for her at that moment. I was very bold, to be sure, for I said, Every body was jealous of you, and with reason; for, you *was* as handsome as you *was* good, and as good as you *was* handsome. I do believe, Miss, I set up her back; for, she stirred the fire in a great hurry, and pulled the bell twice together, and when the servant came, she said: 'Show Mary Thomas down stairs,' and never turned her face towards me, while I was leaving the room." I was grieved that this worthy creature's blind partiality to me should have led her thus far, though I could not but approve her feeling contempt of her Ladyship.

One day, as I was at work, making a Sunday-apron for nurse, a girl came to see her, and in the course of the conversation, asked Whether she knew of any person who wanted a situation. "It is,"

said she, "to wait upon two ladies; they are very sweet-tempered people: they give excellent wages, and she should have her meals in her own apartment, besides many comforts and conveniencies." Adversity, Lady Jane, renders the mind suspicious. I thought it possible nurse Thomas might have planned this; I even fancied she looked rather confused. Feeling uneasy with the idea, I determined, as soon as the stranger was gone, to propose going after the place, if it was at some distance, not wishing to be near those who had treated an unfortunate girl with so much unkindness. Accordingly, I enquired of nurse, Where the family lived? She answered, That the young woman could not learn it of the housekeeper, but that she said, It was a most desirable place. "Well," said I, "if I thought I could go thither as your niece, or indeed any way, provided I might not be known as Miss St. Helen, I should be happy to do it; for, I have nothing to support me; my mind is superior to misfortune, and po-

verty shall not debase it." "My God! Miss Julia," said the good creature, bursting into tears, "what then have I done, that you should leave me? Ah! I have offended you by repeating what Lady Boon had said." "You are mistaken," I replied; "I am obliged to you for the information; for, otherwise, I might for ever live in ignorance of what people think of me—but you know it would be improper that I should appear to live at your expence; every body would be justified in condemning me. This place is exactly such as would suit me, and we must by all means make further enquiries." Nurse did every thing she could to dissuade me from it, but without effect. The young woman was accordingly sent for; but she told us, That she really did not know what family it was, being merely employed by the housekeeper, who lived with her mistress, to enquire for such a person, as she had already mentioned; if, however, I would get into the stage with her, as she was returning home, I might learn

every thing concerning it. I immediately assented to this proposal, and assuming a cheerfulness my heart was a stranger to, I got in. We rode nine miles and alighted at a very handsome house, where we were met by the housekeeper, who greeted my companion very cordially, saying, "She would send her on an errand again, as she had succeeded so very well." I asked, Who the ladies were, and where they lived? She told me, They were the Miss Mellish's, names I had never heard of, and that they lived four miles off: she then enlarged on the favor she conferred on *me*, and the obligation she laid me under, by recommending me to such a *jewel* of a place. She added: "It will be proper to go to the great house this instant, as the ladies did talk of going to-morrow to Brighthelmstone; not that we can see them to-night, but I am hand and glove with the gentlewoman who is going to leave them." She bid me make tea, while she went up to her lady for leave to go, which was granted, as also the coach ordered to take us, as there

was no other possible way of going at so late an hour.

It looks so much like rain, that I had best fold up this sheet of paper, and carry it to the office before the shower comes on. My dear Lady Jane will have the continuation to-morrow, as I have no desire more strong than that of obeying her commands. Believe me ever, &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XX.

The same to the same.

IT was ten o'clock at night, and very dark, when we alighted at the *great house*, so that I only guessed it was an immense body of building, without being able to distinguish whether of brick or stone. We supped in the housekeeper's

apartment, after which I went to sleep in a two-bedded room with my conductress. In the morning, she got up early, but I stayed behind till the dreaded hour of interview. She brought me a bason of tea, while I was dressing, and advised me to follow her down stairs, that I might be in readiness, which I agreed to. In a few minutes, I quitted the room, but in going down the second flight of stairs, I saw the passage leading to the principal staircase open, and ornamented with paintings as large as life. I thought I could get to the bottom undisturbed, when, surveying the portraits, I saw . . . . my father!!! I advanced—drew back—advanced again—it was HE, starting from the canvass. I was deprived of motion—I fell down—It was at Ellisborough Hall—my father's house—the place of my unfortunate birth, that I was trying to become a *hired servant!* I turned my eyes, and beheld my sainted mother, equally animated, for both paintings were by Reynolds. Their eyes were bent upon me—I clasped my hands in agony—nature

was overpowered, and I fainted away. When come to myself, I perceived that I was in the room I had supped in; my wish was to quit the house instantly, but that was impossible—I must *first* be seen. Nevertheless, I trusted I might still escape *unknown*; for, if I *was* hired, I could send a written excuse for not going to my place. The veil of my bonnet was down —my eyes were hid—and I devoutly commended myself to heaven.

The bell now rang—my knees knocked under me with apprehension, lest I should have the same stairs to mount—my heart beat, and my voice faultered. I was, however, led into a library below, where three ladies sat at breakfast, one of which bade me advance. "Pin up your veil, child," said another, "my nieces can't see you." "Very personable, upon my word," said the third—when lifting up my eyes, I saw a second portrait of my beloved father over the chimney piece! They now poured forth a torrent of tears. "Good heaven!" said one of three, "What is the matter?"

"I am very ill," I replied, "and unfit for your service, ladies; allow me to withdraw." "Not till you are better," said the youngest; "you shall take some lavender drops"—and leading me to the sopha, she made me sit on it, while her sister brought me some, with a little sugar. I heard the aunt say: "What an interesting creature!" Three times I attempted to rise, but they would not suffer me to depart till I was recovered. Miss Mellish said, "That she was sure we should like each other very well, if I would undertake the place. Nay," added she, "you must positively think of it—we would make it easy—for we like your appearance very much."

I was now taking my leave, when the servant ushered in a visitor, who, upon viewing me, exclaimed: "Lord bless me! Julia St. Helen! who would have thought of meeting you here?" I could make no answer; but one of the ladies informed her of my errand. "Well," said she, "have you hired her? Strange enough to see Miss St. Helen, seeking a service in the very

hall belonging to her father!" "Miss St. Helen!" said one. "Miss St. Helen!" echoed another: "Now the mystery is cleared up—Sir John's picture . . ." "Well, Miss Julia St. Helen," said Miss Boon, "I congratulate you upon your want of feeling. I own I could sooner beg my bread than be a domestic in the very house I *once* called my own." "Did you not know where you *was* coming to, Miss St. Helen?" said the aunt. I felt so great a contempt for Miss Boon, that it gave me a degree of eloquence in reply, which raised a blush upon her cheeks, and drew tears from the eyes of the other ladies. With a dignity that ever attends self-approbation I took my leave, charmed with the sensibility of Miss Mellish, who told me, She should dine with Lady Boon on the following day, and would call upon me in her way thither. They attended me into the housekeeper's room, where I rejoined my unsuccessful conductress, and soon after returned to the cottage of nurse Thomas, whose tears kept pace with mine,

during the recital of these distressing occurrences.

You will not be surprised, my dear Madam, when I tell you that I had a violent nervous fever, in consequence of the extreme agitation I had experienced. The *feeling* visitor at the hall had saved me the trouble of receiving Miss Mellish's visit, as she informed the ladies, "That I had been exceedingly impertinent about a trimming I had to sell—That I had tried to take her brother in, and indeed aimed at attracting universal admiration, by going through every accomplishment, in the space of ten minutes, *if* there was but a man in the way. She was certain I must know Ellisborough-Hall, for *I was no chick*, when I left it, and nothing but downright curiosity had brought me there to have a view of its inhabitants, for that I had a most violent passion to place my pretty person in languishing attitudes." The woman I went with repeated this to nurse, while *all* the disappointment I felt

was to see that the Miss Mellishes were less perfect than I had imagined them to be, from the compassion they had expressed for me.

I recovered very slowly from this attack upon my nerves, though I received all the assistance that skill, good nursing and affection could give me. Soon after, I read an advertisement in the papers for a governess to a young lady, who must reside the whole year in the country. "My good nurse," said I, "now wish me joy; here is something that promises well; I must answer it instantly. It is upwards of sixty miles from London; consequently, I shall quit this county: only let me bear your name, and prevail upon the good rector to say something in my favor, if occasion requires." "Your own name, my dear child," said she, "will do you more service than mine. How happy would any good person be to know he had lightened a sorrowing heart! you would excite respect merely because you had been unfortunate; for, I trust in God there are a

hundred good hearts for one that is depraved." "I hope so too," said I; "but, though I am certain I have no improper pride to subdue, yet I feel a repugnance to the telling of my name, from an odd presentiment that I shall some day or other regain part of my property. The repugnance, and the presentiment may perhaps be thought ridiculous; for, I ought to glory in submitting to God's will in preference to my own, and devote my thoughts to something more substantial than the trifles of this world. In short, nurse, I have been making a thousand resolves, and the first is to be a burthen to you no longer."

I lost no time in writing my letter, which was dispatched immediately, and answered in three days. It informed me of the nature of my employment, and at the same time I was asked to say where a recommendation could be had. Nurse had great interest with the rector, who willingly answered, "That I would endeavour to discharge the trust reposed in me

with fidelity." I was so anxious to be earning my bread, that I felt no mortification at becoming subservient to the caprices of a superior, and I bade my dear kind-hearted maternal friend adieu with lessened regret, because I rid her of an inconvenience by removing myself.

Sir Francis Banmore had a little girl, eight years old, who had been sickly from her cradle, and required a person to be continually upon the watch, to prevent indisposition—an office I was well calculated to discharge, being naturally affectionate in my disposition. This situation gave me so much time for indulging my sad reflections, that it injured my health; but I acquitted myself to the entire satisfaction of Sir Francis. When I first undertook the arduous task of forming Miss Banmore's mind and manners, her father was of a very gay turn. I was three weeks in the house, without ever seeing him, except the first day, when he was rather overcome with wine. At the second interview, he had to-

tally forgot me; for, he approached me with a most respectful bow, saying, "He did not know what lady did his little girl the honor of calling upon her, but if I would enable him to do so, he would send up my name." I replied, "My little charge, Miss Banmore, would be highly delighted, Sir Francis, at your calling her governess a visitor. We are just returned from a walk in the Park, and my hat and cloak are your apologies for a mistake not in the least mortifying to me." During six months, I did not see him six times, till the prorogation of Parliament brought him down on Fanny's birth-day. To any other than Lady Jane I would conceal the attentions of that being, who alone could have made me happy; but to you, Madam, I bare my bosom, and translate every thought as it arose at the moment, conscious that you will enter into my feelings, and not condemn me for a partiality so well founded as mine. O my God! shower down upon him every felicity!

Let him never reproach himself upon my account — but this is anticipating—I am weak enough to be obliged to lay aside my pen, but remain, &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XXI.

The same to the same.

NEXT day, Sir Francis dined out, as usual, but told Miss Banmore he would sup with her — a plate was also ordered to be laid for *me*. When supper came in, Sir Francis said: "*Miss Thomas*, take your seat." The cloth being removed, he entered into the various branches of education necessary for a girl of such expectations as his Fanny was, "Whose fortune," said he, "will in all probability be one of the largest in the kingdom. I make her over to you, Miss

Thomas; you will direct her in every thing, and I will answer for Fanny that she attends strictly to every arrangement you propose, as I shall not interfere. As you are able to teach her a little music, drawing, dancing and French, these studies will at present occupy her time, and at the age of twelve or thirteen, I will complete the rest by providing such masters as may then be required. To-morrow, I shall be able to form an opinion of my girl's taste for music, as she tells me you play extremely well, and I hope I shall have the pleasure to hear you." He led the conversation on more subjects than one, and said some very obliging things at two or three new ideas which I ventured to start.

Sir Francis had not for many years quitted his bed till twelve or one in the day; but now, such was his affection for Fanny, that he wished to superintend her education, at least until he saw whether I was capable of performing my task. In a few mornings, he ordered breakfast to be made in the Library, as he intended to rise ear-

lier in future. As soon as this meal was over, we regularly adjourned to the harpsichord, and when all our morning tasks were completed, we took an airing at his desire, generally accompanying us himself. Indeed I was quite charmed to see so young a father so tenderly attached to his child, so ardently anxious for her improvement, so attentive to her health—in short, he seemed quite wrapped up in her. To myself he behaved with that uniform politeness which every well-bred man will always show to our sex; his conversation was not only pleasing, but highly instructive. Time got the better of that awe which at first could not but make me awkward in his presence, and had a proper influence over my actions and words; I now became quite easy and persuaded myself I was as happy as I ever could be. I played with pleasure, and sung with *more* than pleasure; for Sir Francis always joined me. I exerted every power to improve Fanny in every thing I taught her, and my endeavours were crowned with

success, for the dear child loved me most affectionately, and earnestly sought for instruction. Her father soon became so fond of a domestic life, that he would stay at home a week or ten days at a time, often denying himself to visitors, while I often asked myself what made the hours fly more rapidly than when I was flattered and caressed by the world—a toast and a fortune. I recovered my health, spirits and looks, and was more occupied with thoughts of the present moment than the gloomy retrospect of the past, which till now had distressed me in spite of my better knowledge.

His attentions to me received a daily increase; he never failed to gather for me the fellow rose to that which he himself wore; the finest peach or nectarine was mine, in preference to Fanny's; whatever bonnet or riband he bought her, I had the same, but his delicacy was such, that he would always bid Fanny make the present, which rendered it easy for me to accept. One morning, we strolled out into the

park, when we were caught in a sudden shower. Sir Francis desired Fanny to run and send out the umbrella, as he would not suffer me to go, for fear of encreasing a violent cold under which I had laboured for some days. In the mean time, we took shelter under a large oak, but a heavy storm of thunder and lightning made it unsafe to continue there. Luckily for the child, she escaped it, and got into the house. As we quitted the tree, Sir Francis pulled off his coat and placed it on my shoulders. It was in vain for me to beg and pray that he would keep it himself, he was inflexibly obstinate, and placing my arm under his, we sallied forth to the house, which we reached in a few minutes, he wet to the skin, as you may well imagine. While he was changing his linen, I mixed some brandy with warm water, which I carried to the door, and which his servant told me he drank off instantly. Thank God! he escaped without any illness. But though such care had been taken of me, I had a violent sore throat, and

in the evening I grew very hoarse. I never closed my eyes the whole night, and the next morning was too ill to get up. The sweet Fanny made breakfast, and brought it up to me. I told her she should have *sent* it—her papa would miss her company. "No, he will not," said she; "for, Susan came for it, but papa said: 'I am sure Fanny will wish to carry it herself,' and so I did—Papa tasted it, to see if it was good, and he says I make tea very well."

Finding myself better, I got up at one, and Sir Francis betrayed no common satisfaction at seeing me come down stairs. He said nothing particular, but was all life and spirits. He felt my pulse, and looked so humanely affectionate, that I experienced an undescribable embarrassment, to conquer which, I led Miss Banmore to the harpsichord. He now walked to the window, took up a book, and kept on reading for some time. Fanny begged that I would play over her lesson *once*, that she might catch the exact time—The harmony of my soul was evident in my fingers—for, in

fact, I never played so well before. In the midst of the tune, he seated himself on a chair opposite to me, and when I had finished, he exclaimed in rapture: "Good God! Julia, you are too much."

In this manner did five months pass. The only person that came to see us *sans cérémonie*, was a clergyman who had the best living belonging to the estate. He was a very sensible well-bred man, and indeed Sir Francis had prepossessed me much in his favor. After two or three visits, however, things were altered—whatever Mr. Ford did was wrong—if the poor man took a chair near mine, his patron gave him short answers the rest of the evening, and, when it was time to depart, though it rained ever so hard, he never asked his former favorite to stay, though he had above twenty spare beds in the house. However, I must do him the justice to say, that he always pressed the umbrella upon him, or offered him the carriage with surprising cordiality.

Though I may not already have convin-

ced you, from my want of descriptive powers, of the growing partiality of Sir Francis, yet, it was evident in every look and action. I saw it with transport, Lady Jane; I knew that my family was equal to his, the only barrier I imagined he saw to our union, and anticipated the time when I should have it in my power to acquaint him with my history. He would continually say to me: "I ought to hate you, you have made me miserable." My embarrassment upon such occasions told him that he was the object of my tenderest regard, yet he did not speak more openly. Reason, not inclination, made me absent myself from Miss Banmore's apartment, when I thought it likely that he might be there. At meals, however, I had the happiness of joining them.

One day, Fanny and I were dressed alike, with purple bonnets and ribands, and were going to drink tea at Mr. Ford's, whose sister was on a visit at his house. "Why, papa," said the child innocently, "I am sure Miss Ford will take Miss Thomas for

my mother, because we are dressed alike." Never did a creature look so confused as I did at that moment. I could not lift up my eyes from the table—my face was in a glow—the fork fell out of my hand, and this new confusion quite overpowered me. Fanny saw my situation, and imagined it was in consequence of my thinking that she meant *I looked old enough to be taken for her mother:* she, therefore, added to my distress by excusing herself, and assuring me, That she did not mean to say that I should pass for *her* mother, because I was so young, but for her *mother-in-law.* I blundered out "Miss Fanny never designed to offend me in her life." Sir Francis saw my suffering, and taking a letter from his pocket, asked me, Whether I had ever seen such spelling? This question revived me, and dinner ended as well as could be expected after so *unpleasing* a flurry.

Sir Francis said He should not go with us, as he had letters to write, but would come after; we therefore went by ourselves

and made an apology for him. Poor Ford was rather particular in his attentions to me that evening, in the absence of his patron, and at last seized an opportunity to put it out of my power to misconstrue his meaning. I was so immersed in the thoughts of what had occurred at dinner-time, that I had not the power of attending to what he said. I, however, told him That I could not let him continue one moment in doubt—my affections were not in my power to bestow upon him, nor ever would be. He went on in the usual persuasive strain, but I gave an inviting look to little Fanny, who came to rescue me from a disagreeable conversation. At nine o'clock we returned, and found Sir Francis sitting where we had left him. He was extremely thoughtful, and scarcely said a word to either of us; but his eyes spoke even more than words. In my own mind I thought him uneasy about Mr. Ford, as I had frequently seen him so, when there was not the smallest occasion.

Next day, while I was giving Fanny

some instructions in drawing, her father came into our apartment, and accosting the child, said: "My love, I want to have a little conversation with your friend, Miss Thomas, about you; go into the next room, and then I will recal you when you are wanted." I got up, flurried by the solemnity of his countenance, and the tremor of his voice, and opened the door for the child to withdraw. When returned, he desired me to be seated, and placing himself by me, said: "When I tell the amiable Julia, that the present moment is the most important of my life, I trust it will induce her to attend to what I am going to say, with all the seriousness it demands. There is so large a portion of happiness or misery depending on your reply, that I earnestly entreat you not to give it, until you have attentively considered the subject."

At this moment, Madam, did my heart expand; I felt ten thousand grateful sensations, but could not form a sentence to express them. I struggled to conceal the

agitation he caused, but my fleeting color betrayed his ascendancy over my mind. "Most amiable and beloved girl," said he, "I was in hopes I had been sufficiently master of myself to have unbosomed my soul to you at this interview; but I find I cannot . . . . . I have it written in my hand—peruse it with your accustomed good sense, and make a man who adores you happy." So saying, he withdrew.

It required a few moments to recover myself sufficiently to read the contents of the paper . . . . . when I had half done, I tore it to atoms. . . . . The impression it made upon me is not forgotten. It began by an avowal of "The most tender passion, the most disinterested affection that ever warmed the heart." I kissed the declaration in extacy—I thanked God for it. "He wished to share his fortune with one so deserving of every blessing—Julia, whose happiness was still more dear to him than his own—He besought me to take the sole disposal of himself and his affairs—In point of settlement, he had so

high an opinion of my liberality of sentiment, that he gave me *carte blanche.*" I again poured forth the effusions of my soul—"Generous, amiable man!—Yes, I glory in loving you." Again I read—"He proposed sending Fanny to school . . . when his *beloved*, his *adored* Julia, invested with every thing, but . . . . the . . . . *mere* name . . . . . ."

The hated paper was already scattered ten thousand ways—I was choaked with indignation—contempt swallowed up every other sensation—hatred of *him* and shame of *myself*, for being the object of so despicable a passion, by turns convulsed me. Cruel, inhuman wretch!—insidiously destroying my peace—worming himself into the deepest recesses of my heart, to poison its repose! Memory at this moment brings back the inexpressible anguish, rage, despair, abhorrence and contempt, which tore my humiliated soul.

On his giving me the letter and withdrawing, I had bolted the door after him, that I might not be interrupted in reading

the declaration of a passion, which I never once suspected could be otherwise than honorable. No words can sufficiently express the state of my feelings after the perusal. For some time, I sat immoveable, unable to relieve my oppressed heart with a single tear. At length, however, the tenderness I had so recently felt for him, produced in my ideas such a contrast to my present hatred, that I wept like a child. One moment, I wished it might please God to take me, and the next I prayed to heaven I might survive this agonising trial, lest *his* future happiness should be imbittered by knowing *himself* to be the *cause.* Uniform in nothing but wretchedness, for, whether loving or hating, *that* must inevitably be my lot, I did not perceive that night was approaching, and that eight hours had elapsed since the horrid moment in which my peace had been destroyed for ever.

The tumult within my bosom now began to subside, and I endeavoured to summon up my senses, that I might resolve on what

was best to be done, when I was interrupted by the voice of my dear little Fanny, who tapped at the door, saying: "Do, dear, dear Miss Julia, do, pray, let me in, and I will love you for ever." I opened the door, and the child threw her affectionate arms about my neck. Her sensibility was too much for her; she wept aloud, from sympathy, for she was a stranger to the real cause of my sorrow. When I embraced her, and beheld her so interested for me, every tender sentiment for her father rushed in upon my soul—till the injury he had just done me suddenly effaced it, and extinguished every remaining spark of affection for him. Tears again came to my relief, and Fanny, who was sitting on my lap, wiped them with one hand, while the other was sweetly employed in patting me on the cheek. "Dearest Miss Julia," said she, "you do not love me, or I am sure you would tell me what afflicts you so. I never will mention it to any body, if you forbid me—only do, tell me, or I shall cry all night." "You have

heard me talk of Mary Thomas," I answered; "she wishes to see me, and I must, yes, my love, I *must* quit you, but it breaks my heart." She looked at me for some minutes—"No, no, my dear Julia—now I see you do not love me, because you will not tell me the truth. Papa knows what is the cause—he is very odd to-day; he would not let me sit with him, but kept walking in and out of his study into the hall and parlour, backward and forward—and sat down to dinner—and could not eat a mouthful—and would not let me eat neither—but bid John clear the table. All the servants have asked me what was the matter with papa, and where you yourself were, but I said I did not know."

At this instant, one of the servants came to announce supper, and to tell Miss Banmore that Sir Francis was gone to bed with a violent headach, and had left orders to enquire after my health, as, by not seeing me at dinner, he feared I was not well. As a blind to the servants, I walked into the parlour, took a crust of bread and a

glass of wine, which indeed exhausted nature wanted, and retiring with my sweet charge, undressed her for the last time, and joined in her prayers.

She dropped asleep almost immediately, and as I had determined to leave the house early the next morning, I spent part of the night in packing up my clothes, which was not done without shedding many tears. When I had completed the last bundle, I took the candle in my hand, and went to the bedside, to take a parting survey of my beloved Fanny. I wept over the child of him who had been planting a dagger in my heart—of the man whom of all the world I loved most—whom of all the world I *ought to hate.* When I looked at the beautiful personification of innocence, I could not help exclaiming: "How few hours have elapsed, since, in the warmth of my fondest prayer, I sought to call thee *daughter!*—to be thy parent, friend, instructress!—every tender name united in one! The sun which rose to see me thus blessed in idea, has at its setting left me the

most wretched of human beings!" I kissed her warm cheek, and retired—I returned, and gave her *one* kiss more—for her father's sake—My candle was already burnt to the socket, and I seated myself in the arm-chair; but sleep never came to my relief; I heard every hour strike throughout the long, long night, the stillness of which was only interrupted at intervals by a groan from Sir Francis. I heard it—and knelt down to beseech heaven to grant him a more tranquil repose. At length, daylight appeared; I listened attentively to the footsteps of the housemaid who always rose at six, and opening the chamber-door, followed her down stairs, with two little bundles in my hand. The girl was extremely surprised, and urged me to stay till Sir Francis was up, as he would lend me the carriage; but on my telling her that I should be miserable till I got to poor Mary Thomas, I persuaded her to unbar the door, and giving her half-a-guinea, begged she would forward my trunks to the directions upon them. When

I got out of the gate, I turned back my eyes to the chamber that contained all that was dear to me on earth. Heaven granted my petition— he *is* happy.

Though extremely faint and dejected, I pursued my journey with the greatest expedition. I had near two miles to go to the stage, and after such a night as I had passed, you may well suppose I was most sensible of the fatigue. I had walked to within a short distance of the place, when, hearing a horse close behind me, I turned to get out of the road—Who should appear to my astonished sight, but Sir Francis Banmore! The surprise was so great that I almost shrieked out—words cannot convey the state of my feelings. He instantly dismounted, and coming up to me, said: "Unkind Julia! I did not expect this severity at your hands." "And pray, Sir Francis," I answered, "what levity of mine could induce you to suppose that your offer could be received otherwise than with contempt? I only beg of you to

leave me—I ask it as the *only* favor *I* ever can request, or *you* comply with."

—" You seem to enjoy a savage pleasure in rendering the man who adores you wretched; *that* alone could make you speak with such cool philosophy upon the subject of an eternal parting. Are you determined to make me loath myself?—my existence?"

—" Ah! Sir Francis, it is you, have taught me the misery of loathing light and life. You, Sir, have embittered every moment of *my* existence, by humbling, deliberately humbling me, whose sole ambition was to be worthy of your love: but I have done, Sir. In return for your cruel barbarity of yesterday, I . . . ."

—" Stop, Julia, stop, for heaven's sake, and do not make me still more wretched."

—" I devotely pray God, Sir Francis, to make you but as happy as you have made me miserable—blessing can extend no farther."

—" Inhuman, cruel girl! let these tears

of contrition procure me a candid hearing. Upon my soul you quite unman me. Have you not, ever since you came to live under my roof, witnessed the insurmountable passion which consumed me? Constantly every night did I resolve to quit my home for Bath, Paris, or any place, but the one you were in; but hearing your voice, or seeing your person in the morning, made every former sensation give way. A thousand times have I been ready to fall at your feet, and entreat you to make your own terms."

—" Cease, Sir Francis, cease to outrage every feeling by such a repetition. I am half criminal by suffering myself to hear you. Leave me to my fate, I beseech you; for, from henceforth I will endeavour to forget that I ever knew you."

—" You may, Madam, some time hereafter reproach yourself for this severity to a man who, at least, deserves your compassion. Did you but consider the cruelty of my situation, you would make some apology for me. The dependance of Fanny,

upon her aunt has involved me thus; had I millions, I had gloried in calling you my wife."

—"To convince me that you take me for a fool is, I allow, an extenuation of your crime. Do not compel me to hate you still more."

—"Have mercy upon me so far as to say, you will endeavour to forget the injury I have done you by that hateful letter."

—"The effort would be vain, Sir; and I am above duplicity. I wish you to know that I *must* resent it in my *heart*, though I forget it in my *actions*, to the last hour of my life."

I was now so exhausted with the walk, want of rest, and present hurry, that I was seized with a violent shivering, and was almost unable to stand. Fortunately, I found myself at the door of the inn, when the stage stopped to change horses, and the travellers to breakfast: I was therefore compelled to go into a parlour, which afforded Sir Francis an opportunity

of pursuing a conversation I so much wished to avoid. He conjured me in the most pathetic manner to give him a patient hearing. He said I *owed* him that attention, and he demanded it. "I must deny it, Sir Francis," said I, "if it is to renew the insult."

—"It is to prove myself less culpable than at present you are disposed to think me, by laying before you a just statement of facts; and, having done so, I rely upon your justice to acquit me of wantonly intending to wound your delicacy."

—"Why will you thus agitate yourself, Sir, and distress *me* by entering into a vindication which *can* be of no avail? I earnestly entreat you to desist from renewing the hateful subject."

"Impossible! Is it generous to condemn me unheard? I *must*, I *will* tell you That my child expects sixty thousand pounds from my sister, Lady Jane Clanville, provided she be not disobliged by either of us: but, unfortunately for me, she is of so determined a nature, so impla-

cable a disposition, that if she once takes a dislike, the whole earth could not eradicate it. I am certain that, were I to ally myself to the first woman in the kingdom, without her approbation and consent, she would be unjust to her innocent niece, by way of revenge, and leave her property for building chapels, and endowing hospitals. Nevertheless, I loved you to such unbounded excess, that I determined to hazard her displeasure by informing her That I had conceived so violent an attachment for a lady of good family, (a deception *you* will surely forgive) distinguished beauty and fine accomplishments, that my happiness depended upon my being united to her; but that I flattered myself with the hope of obtaining her approbation, as it would greatly add to my felicity. Her answer was couched in terms of ironical asperity: she said That I had forgot to mention ONE article, which, in her opinion, superseded family, beauty and accomplishments, and that was FORTUNE. She feared my omission proceeded from its

being a *small one,* and therefore, to save me and herself any further trouble, she would at once acquaint me with her determination, which was That not a sixpence of *hers* should ever descend to a child of *mine,* unless I made a great addition to my fortune in this new connexion. I am so well acquainted with her mercenary disposition, that I do it but mere justice, when I say that she would sooner see me expire than revoke one tittle of her threats. Nay, I went so far as to tell her that the lady had twelve thousand pounds, a sum now lying at my Banker's, and which I would previously have made over to my adored Julia, in order to save my word. The reply to this letter was truly laconic. She said That as I could have a girl with fifty, only for asking, she would not advise me to put up with twelve, if I valued *her* money. Love of my child operated too powerfully upon me—I could not live without you — there was no alternative. The offer of marrying you at Lady Clan-

ville's death, I trusted would be a palliative."

—"How could Sir Francis Banmore, who knew my sentiments upon every subject to be such only as a virtuous mind ought to acknowledge, suppose I ever could get beyond the words *mere name?* There can be no palliative for infamy; though I will own that your endeavours to win over Lady Clanville, and your motives for consulting her, make you less culpable in my eyes."

At this moment, the passengers were getting into the stage, seeing which, he gave way to every extravagance of grief. He conjured me by every thing most sacred to alter my inhuman resolution of leaving his child. He would quit his house, and never return till I recalled him—His future life should be employed in endeavours to reinstate himself in my good opinion, which he confessed he had justly forfeited. In short, his only hope of happiness in this world depended on my forgiveness. I re-

plied That no concession he might make could effect that sort of forgiveness I wished to feel for any one under whose roof I lived. I never could enjoy his, hitherto delightful, society, without reproaching myself for continuing under the protection of a man who had so ungenerously misconstrued my acknowledgement of regard. Had his love been of that pure and refined kind, which my ignorance of the world had persuaded me to believe was the only one that could be offered, he never would have wounded my feelings with such refined insult: my love and affectionate care of his child ought to have preserved me from it.

The stage now drew up for me; I rose and made towards the door, but Sir Francis got between, and placing his back against it, exclaimed: "Immoveable, unfeeling Julia, I see your determination is too strong for *me* to combat at present. But you *must* see your unoffending Fanny; you *must* behold *her* tears; *they* may move you, while her unhappy father, who fondly flat-

tered himself he had some share in your affections, may weep torrents, without exciting your pity. You may, one day, Madam, regret the severity you have shown me." The look which accompanied these words chilled me to the soul—I suffered him to lead me to the stage. "Ungenerous girl!" said he; "Not one word of kindness, at this awful moment? *Can* you—*will* you thus leave me in absolute despair?" "I leave you," I replied, "in possession of my most ardent wishes for your happiness; my fondest prayers shall be offered for your repose—never, oh *never* shall I cease to intreat heaven to make you as blessed as I am wretched.

Hastening forward, I was lifted into the coach, when I beheld him supported by the innkeeper, wholly overcome by grief. Good God! what were my sensations at this moment! . . .

I was too deeply absorbed in my affliction to take notice of any thing that passed till I arrived at my hospitable nurse's

cottage, except that the passengers offered me some hartshorn. One of the women said, "She feared that gentleman was my husband, and was going to sea, by the grief we had expressed at parting." I *looked* a *no*, for I was unable to speak.

When I had reached the end of my journey, and the stage stopped at the door, nurse came out with a face of consternation, and on seeing me, exclaimed: "Alas, alas! what can be the matter? Never, never shall you leave me again. Oh! my beloved Miss Julia, indeed you must 'bide with me; you *must* not, *shall* not go again." "My good nurse,"? said I, "I am too ill at present to give you any explanation."—"Tell me nothing then, unless it will ease your heart, till you are better."—"Better! Such wretchedness as mine can only be eased by death—the recital will kill me." We *resolved* to be silent on the subject for that night; but we broke the resolution, and within the hour I had told *all*. She

sympathised in my sufferings like a faithful friend.

"My dearest lady," said she, "how sincerely do I thank God for giving you such virtuous principles! Yet, excuse me when I say, that in my opinion, you have been too hasty. If he loves you so, while he thinks you a poor lady, without either birth or fortune, what would he not do, if he knew how *grandly* you *was* born? It's my belief he would have married you *outright*. Had I *know'd* how matters went, I'd have brought them to bear, for I'd have told him that your dear father was a Knight and *Baronight*, and that you would reflect honor on a Duke—so I would." I stopped this enthusiasm of affection by saying: "Devoted Julia was born to be the sport of fortune—to suffer and to submit are alike natural to her."

You will not wonder, my dear Lady Jane, at the impression this event had upon me. I sat almost a lifeless clod; my senses were overwhelmed with a kind

of inanimate stupor; I shrunk from the gaze of every stranger who came for the little trifles which nurse had to sell out of her garden, and creeping up stairs, would remain there, till the kind woman with great difficulty persuaded me to come down again. In one of these voluntary banishments, as I was sitting at the casement of my bed-room, I beheld a horse tied to a tree, at the turn of the lane. I was certain I knew it, and viewing it with scrutinising eyes, perfectly recollected it was Helen, Sir Francis Banmore's favorite mare. Agitated to a degree, I found it impossible for me to leave the spot, until I saw the dear little Fanny at the further end of the lane, beckoning somebody to come to her. I hastened down stairs, as pale as ashes, when I saw the dear child, and still dearer father enter the dwelling. The affectionate girl threw her arms about my neck, and kissed me several times, without uttering a word. Sir Francis seemed much altered; he kissed my trembling hand, and appeared more agitated than myself. He tried to

speak, but the unformed accents died upon his lips. Nurse quickly brought in tea, and I carried a dish to Sir Francis, which, with the aid of a little cold water sprinkled upon his face, soon recovered him from sensations that appeared too powerful for him. Fanny was all life and spirits, except at this instant, and said: "Nurse Thomas, do you know that I am come to sleep with my dear Miss Julia? Yes, and to stay with her too, while papa goes to France. I shall be so happy! I shall not miss *him.*" The news turned me sick as death. "I never mean to go home, till she comes with me, mind that, nurse."

"My sweet girl anticipates my errand," said her father; "I am come to leave her with her friend Julia; she will not extend her hatred to the *child;* no, she reserves it *all* for *me.* Fanny comes to try her rhetoric. I am now upon my road to Dover, and am quitting my home—my child—my country—and what is still more dear to me than these united—till you recal me. Let these sacrifices convince you that

your happiness is really dear to me, and that to promote it is the first object of my life. I have left every servant in expectation of your return, and they have my orders to pay implicit obedience to your commands."

"Ah! Sir Francis," said I, "why should you be thus solicitous of my going back? You urge me so close, that you quite overpower me, and forget yourselves in entreating the return of an unfriended, unprotected outcast of society — Those tears, my beloved Fanny, leave me no power to choose. You say, that your happiness depends upon my compliance with your wishes; my resentments vanish—I submit, and will aim at repaying this proof of tender affection by every exertion to make my dear charge as accomplished as she is amiable. No sentiment, but that of obligation, shall henceforth find a place in my bosom. To cancel my former resolves, I will *forget*, that I may be certain I *forgive*."

He felt so great a transport at this declaration, that he was seized with a violent bleeding at the nose, at which I was exceedingly alarmed. Indeed, till this trying moment, I was myself ignorant of the extreme interest my heart took in whatever touched him—thank God, it stopped within the half hour. During the remainder of the evening, Sir Francis had a flow of spirits beyond what I had ever known him to possess. A servant was dispatched to the rector's, to request a bed for that night, and it was settled that we should all dine at the cottage the next day, and afterwards set on our respective journies. Nurse had taken Fanny to see the bed she was to occupy, and during their absence, we had much interesting conversation—so *interesting*, that we exchanged vows of eternal truth. Never was being so amiable, so captivating. We remained convinced that the only probability of touching Lady Clanville was his going abroad, as he meant to let her know that *his diſeaſe was*

of the mind. Perhaps she might feel some compunction, and give her consent to our union. "If, however," said he, "the twelvemonth should pass, without effecting any change in her sordid nature, I will despise her gold, and claim the hand of my too amiable girl."

"You are quite in an error," replied I, "if you imagine that I will ever reward your unbounded generosity to *me*, by so unworthy a conduct towards *your* child—never, my dear Sir. I will wait for you, though Lady Clanville were to live forty years, constant and unchangeable, yours, and yours alone." He urged many arguments against this resolve, but all to no effect, I, however, met his wishes so far as to promise to be his, as soon as Lady Clanville's consent or death enabled him to marry. In either case, he had my permission to set off for England immediately. Never were two beings more enviable than ourselves, notwithstanding the cruel alloy which threatened the destruction of our felicity—that of parting. Indeed it would

frequently force itself upon us, and though we determined again and again not to talk of it, yet every thing we said had a reference to it. Little Fanny's return was of infinite use, as each of us could talk to her by turns; for, there were moments when we found it impossible to address each other with a sufficient degree of composure. Fanny's letters were to be put with *mine*, under the same cover, directed to *me*, and he advised me always to leave this cover about the house, to prevent the talk of servants. He gave and received a lock of hair, which, if I judge of him by myself, was more valuable than diamonds.

When the fatal moment arrived, nurse placed Fanny into the carriage, to allow us the sad consolation of pronouncing our adieus. We again called upon heaven to witness our immutable vows . . . . . but I must pass over this scene—There are situations in life, which one may *feel*, but not describe—I ordered the carriage back to the inn, and passed the night at the cottage— —

I know I have your forgiveness for quitting the subject at present. What a task have I performed!—I do not mean in *length*. I am &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XXII.

The same to the same.

AT our return to Sir Francis Banmore's house, I found a letter, which he had written at the first inn he reached after he had left me: it contained repeated vows of constancy, and every mark of that liberality of sentiment and refinement of soul, of which he was so eminently possessed. Fanny received one also, to say that he had had a pleasant journey so far; but mine was a direct contradiction to that assertion.

Every mail brought me fresh assurances of his unshaken faith and inviolable attachment. He informed me that he wearied Lady Clanville with his letters, but that she continued inflexible; again he protested he should not go beyond the twelvemonth, whether she consented or not.

In the eighth month of his absence, Lady Clanville wrote word to Miss Banmore, that she intended visiting her for a a few days, in her way to London, an information that gave much pain to Fanny, and at the same time filled *me* with anxiety. The child, who was meekness itself, had imbibed such a freezing idea of her haughtiness and ill-humor, that she absolutely cried upon reading the letter. In a few days, however, she regained her usual cheerfulness, as information was brought that her aunt was obliged to postpone her journey for a fortnight—Would to God it had been for ever! Base, hypocritical, designing woman! All former sufferings are forgotten in these superior strokes of refined misery—Surely, I am invulnerable

to wretchedness, or I had long been an early sacrifice to my sorrows.

O early lov'd! thy magic name
Still pales my lip, still shakes my frame;
Still bids my throbbing bosom prove
The sharp, keen pang of hopeless love.

For thee the matin pray'r shall rise
To heav'n, borne up on vagrant sighs;
For thee be found a tenderer thought
Than yet affection ever wrought.

Deep in the bosom's hidden cell
Thy virtues and thy form shall dwell,
Till heav'n's all-pitying will decrees
My *love*—but *first* my *life*—to cease!

and the sooner the better, says Julia St. Helen—Oh! no; let me have no *will*, Father of Bounties, but *thine!*

LETTER XXIII.

The same to the same.

SWEET Fanny was so elated with the postponement of Lady Clanville's visit, that she exclaimed in rapture: "Dear, dearest Miss Julia, I shall be happy a few days longer; my aunt does not come for some time, and on account of this good news, you must let me have a dance on my birthday." I endeavoured to dissuade her from this, as some ill-natured person might report the prime occasion of this festivity, she having been so unguarded in her joy, that the servants had heard it: but she was so bent upon her scheme, that all arguments were vain, particularly as Sir Francis, in his last letter, had desired her to make herself perfectly happy on her birthday. The request was too natural to be opposed, and I promised to gratify her wish.

Three days previous to this fête, we went our rounds to invite twelve young ladies, who were to dance together, and afterwards partake of an elegant little supper. The nights were so very dark, that, to prevent any accident befalling the children on their return home, I had ordered beds to be got ready, and at twelve o'clock the ball was to conclude. At five, Miss Banmore received a note from the Ladies Ann and Charlotte Lorraine, informing her That they were just come from town, and would be glad to accompany their youngest sister to her little dance, if agreeable to her to admit them. I wrote in answer That nothing could give Miss Banmore so much pleasure as having them of the party. When they arrived, Fanny and I went into the hall to receive them, and saw them handed out of the carriage by the two sons of Sir Robert Grange. Miss Banmore, with her usual politeness asked the Gentlemen If they would like to join the company, and as they were undoubtedly brought with the hope that Fanny *would*

invite them, you may be certain they accepted without difficulty. The eldest Mr. Grange was engaged to Lady Charlotte Lorraine, so that she had but to breathe a wish to have it accomplished. Unfortunately, she said: "A dance must be a very stupid thing without men; what delight would it have given the Davenants to have been with us!" Away went Mr. Grange and his brother, and in less than an hour brought Mr. Davenant, Lord Pemberton, Mr. Ford and Sir Archibald Douglas. I wished it had *not* been so; but I knew that nothing improper would happen where I presided. All the gentlemen behaved with the utmost respect and decorum. Every one, after dancing with Fanny, came also to ask *me*, and I accepted the offer. Indeed, my dear Lady Jane, I never could forget that I was the daughter of an ancient and honourable Baronet, and therefore felt no embarrassment in elevated society. I even particularly wished to see myself well received by all these people, as I flattered myself I was destined to spend my life

among them; for, they all held estates contiguous to that of Sir Francis.

Just as supper was announced, the porter's bell rang with such violence, that we were all struck with astonishment. I immediately went into the hall to enquire the cause, and to my great surprise heard Lady Clanville's name given in! I instantly brought Fanny to receive her in another room, as I thought she might be fatigued, or perhaps might choose to be seen in her travelling dress. I rejoined the company, and also desired the supper to be delayed a quarter of an hour, to give time to Fanny to explain to her aunt who I was, and the occasion of this little festivity. I then went to ask her Whether she would enter the saloon, or have refreshments sent into the room she was in—she chose the latter. Supper being served up, Lord Pemberton led me to the head of the table, a seat he had often seen me occupy, when Sir Francis was at home, and placed himself on my right hand, while Sir Archibald Douglas did the same on my

left. Soon after, I perceived that Lady Clanville had altered her mind and made one of our party. Lady Ann Lorraine quitted the chair she occupied next to Lord Pemberton, while I also made her an offer of the post of honor—and fatigue; but to this she never condescended to give an answer, though she looked full in my face, and heard every syllable I spoke. From time to time she would survey me with looks of the greatest contempt, and had I been inclined to forget my situation, she would have put it out of my power to have succeeded. She called me "Mrs. What d'ye call'm," and "Mrs. Thingamy," and "Mrs. Governess." The latter, Sir Francis had always cautioned the child against, bidding her only use the terms "My Friend," or "Miss Julia," and desiring me studiously to avoid calling my loved charge any thing but "Fanny," or "Dear Girl." This marked unkindness offended Fanny, even more than it hurt me; "Miss Julia," said she, "is my friend, aunt; and my best friend too," and

quitting her seat, she came and kissed me. Every one censured Lady Clanville's behaviour, in a low voice: as to me, I endeavoured to suppress the mortification I could not but feel, lamenting that any body could take a wanton satisfaction in humbling a person incapable of giving offence, even if she had it in her power. What added to the unpleasantness of my situation was, that Lady Clanville was to the rest of the company a woman of the first fashion, highly bred, and elegantly winning in her words and actions. The contrast was the greater, as it discovered a designed contempt, not an accidental neglect. At eleven, we returned to the ball-room, and at the expiration of one more hour, the men, though unbidden, took their leave, telling Miss Banmore That they had many thanks to return her and her friend, for the pleasure they had enjoyed, that evening. I could perceive the old dowager full of vexation, at seeing the respect that was paid to me, and, in my turn, I was ill-natured enough to enjoy it. Fan-

and I accompanied her to her chamber, where, after five minutes conversation, we left her to rest.

I devoted two hours of that night to write to Paris, in answer to a letter I had received from Sir Francis. I informed him of Lady Clanville's arrival, and of her surprising us in the midst of our festivity. I told him of every person that came, and having nothing to disguise, added many remarks of my own, to convince him that my health and spirits were both good. I, however, omitted the unamiable traits in his sister's character, wishing rather to promote peace than discord between them, knowing that my beloved friend would break through all bounds to resent an injury done to *me*.

Sir Francis had, during the eight months of his absence, observed the most scrupulous attention to my peace of mind. His letters came regularly, and most of them were written at those hours when he ought to have been at rest. The assurance of being still in possession of his love might,

perhaps, make me find ten thousand charms in them, which another would not have perceived; but partiality out of the question, they certainly were interesting to a degree. Little did I imagine at that time that I ever should, in a paroxysm of phrenzy, commit them to the flames? Never, in thought, word or deed, did this best of men cease to be amiable. From my soul do I acquit him, now that the treachery of Lady Clanville is known to me—but fate forbids my vindicating myself to one still dearer to me than existence. Honor bids me fly him—bids me be silent under wrongs which will bring me to a premature grave. O my God! with what energy do I pray for my appointed hour! Yes, in the very moment when I appear most cheerful, does my aching heart, sick of the void within, anticipate that peace which death alone can restore. Hope allures me with a belief that his strides are rapid—O thou, my only good! do not desert me. Lead me on my way, and by thy divine influ-

ence, shorten the little remnant of my life!

O may thy kind, thy gentle pow'r
Sustain me in the coming hour!
When nature stands aghast,
When death's pale hand these eyes shall close,
And my long pilgrimage of woes
Shall have an end at last.

When the pale lamp of life expires,
When Reason's calm, and Fancy's fires
Shall quit this throbbing breast,
Oh! then, my lovely cherub, stay,
And bear my parting soul away
To realms of endless rest!

I beg my dear Lady Jane's pardon, for writing thus unintelligibly; a fit of dejection which is just come upon me is the cause of it; but I will rally my spirits and try to make myself understood.

In looking over some papers, which had lain for these three years at the bottom of a drawer, I found a letter of Sir Francis

Banmore's; it is now the only sacred relique I possess, my hair-ring excepted: for, I returned, as you may well suppose, his picture, which had, through many a weary hour of absence, afforded me the greatest comfort—but to talk, or even to think of him *now* is criminal—I will fill up this packet with a copy of that letter, the original, though torn, being too valuable to part with it, even to you. I am already much exhausted, but nothing shall ever affect the sense of obligation which will ever he acknowledged, by your's, &c.

JULIA ST. HELEN.

LETTER XXIV.

Sir Francis Banmore to Julia St. Helen.

WHAT a fool does this same love make of me! I sent this morning to the post-office, as usual, for a letter—the servant

returned without one. I felt sadly disappointed—I grew uneasy and fretful. My breakfast was brought up—the coffee was too cold—the toast too thick—and I had the headach. Unable to bear it any longer, I went myself to the office; the mail was that instant arrived—your letter was within my grasp. I devoured it; it was not *too thick*, but it was *too cold*; however it cured my *headach*; and at my return, I found the very breakfast I had rejected still lying on the table—I think I never ate a better in my whole life . . . .

I will obey you; what you say is right; I ought not to return till you make me the happiest of human beings; nor will I urge it any more. I endeavour, because it is your wish, to amuse myself. I frequently go to Madame la Duchesse de R. who is extremely *aimable*, which comprehends *more* and *leſs* than our English word *amiable*. For instance, an Englishwoman may be very reserved, and even unpleasing in her conversation—a Frenchwoman may be exceedingly *aimable*, though she is the very

soul of intrigue. Her Grace is uncommonly sensible and innately witty, proving to me the justness as well as elegance of Mr. Burke's definition of wit. "Wit," says he, "consists in tracing resemblances, judgment in finding out differences." She is admirably clever in each walk—you were born to know each other. She possesses in some degree that undescribable expression of countenance so attractive in my adored Julia. I can always translate a *sentence* beforehand, by looking at *her* eyes—I could translate a *conversation*, by looking at *yours*. Ye eloquent and artless monitors, how often have ye rebuked me in language more searching, more forcible than any words!

I almost quarrelled last night with this enchanting creature of sixty-five. (I am vain enough to *hope* that I have made you uneasy.) She affirmed, That selfishness predominated in all our actions; that, if we traced any one deed, however heroic, exalted, humane or benevolent, to its original source, we should end the enquiry in

self. I combated the assertion. "Heavens and earth, Madam!" said I, "do you call selfish the generous action of your countryman, the Duc de Biron, who, at the beginning of the American war, hearing that an Englishman, one of the most brave and gallant officers any age or country ever produced, was confined within the walls of a prison, and judging of his national enemy by himself, for he well knew what *he* would have suffered in a similar situation, when his king and country demanded his arm, liberally opened his heart and purse together. "Go, Sir," said he; "go and exert that arm in the field; consider me as your bitterest enemy *there*, but in every other place, as your warmest friend." "Do you call *this* selfishness?" "Every inch of it, Sir," she replied; "the Duke found that the applying of five or ten thousand pounds to so exalted a purpose would purchase him a larger share of self-satisfaction, than the building of a magnificent palace, or treasuring it up in his coffers, could possibly do. You must

appeal to your own heart, to do my argument justice. Do we *love* to gratify the *object*, or to please ourselves?"

I found that the Dutchess was right. I asked myself, Why, if I possessed millions, I would lay them at your feet? The answer was, Because, without you, they would be joyless—Why I sacrificed my country, friends, society, health, and dearer than the four together, my child? Because your love, fame, were still *dearer* to me than all these united. "I am convinced," said she, "you have an attachment in England, and hope you will illustrate my argument. If *self* were not in the case, you would yield her up to a lover, as amiable as you are, but who had a larger fortune, a higher rank, and greater opportunities of gratifying her ambition and administering to her pleasures; for, if you withheld her from *him*, it would be *selfish*; you must allow that." "I am a convert, my dear Madam," said I—"and nothing proves my being *selfish* so forcibly, as the

having engaged you so long in a conversation upon the subject."

Lady Clanville has written two very affectionate letters, in both of which she urges my return. She says, "She feels alone in the world while I am absent." I told her, "That I had not the most distant thought of returning to England, as the attachment I had for an object, who felt a reciprocal regard for me, represented to my mind scenes too trying to encounter; that I believed I should send for Fanny, and pass the remainder of my life abroad." I am convinced she imagines one of the Lorraines to be my divinity, as she always writes in the most vehement terms against that family. The girls have all twelve thousand pounds each, and this is what misleads her. I think it likely she may pay Fanny a visit, in order to make discoveries. Ah! were her heart the seat of one delicate sentiment, she would in that visit discover your exalted worth, and regret that fortune had placed you out of a

court, where so shining an example of virtue and goodness could not fail to have an influence on all around you. Did she possess any sensibility, she would instantly discern that your *mind*, without the enchantment of *form* were sufficient to enslave her brother.

I am exceedingly pleased with my little Fanny's style of writing. She tells me, She avoided showing you her last letter, for fear you should call the many truths she mentions of you flattery. What luxury do I anticipate in the society, love and affection of two *such* women! Fanny's mind is formed by *your* precepts and example; what a security to me that she must be every thing her fond father can possibly desire! Her person promises to be like her dear mother's, which was uncommonly interesting. Fanny adds your pensiveness to her mother's vivacity, and these two sweets cannot but make a delightful mixture. A paragraph in each of her last letters makes me. . . . *not* uneasy . . , . but why does Mr. Ford call upon you so often? In each

letter, she says: "Mr. Ford tells me so;" consequently Ford *must* have called upon you. He is not the extraordinary person I once thought him, though his manners are wonderfully insinuating. I heartily wish old Mason were provided for; I should be truly happy to give Ford the living in Rutlandshire immediately, or in the meantime, I would exert myself with my friends to get him preferred. Do not tell him this; I will write to him myself, as you know he might construe any thing *you* said into a kind of interest you took in his affairs.

You relate nurse Thomas's case so simply, so feelingly, and so pathetically, that, were I a stoic, I must descend to humanity. All her grievances shall be redressed. The small house adjoining the farm-yard can be rendered comfortable for ten or twelve pounds, and you shall be gratified in fitting it up as you please for her reception—acknowledge this to be a gratification. To myself it would be a luxurious one; as every brick were laid, or nail

driven in, I would say: "This is for the worthy friend of my adored, my dearest Julia; what an enviable situation to be able to oblige any one *she* esteems!" Let her be removed instantly, and if she is in want of cash, let *your heart* and *my purse* act in unison. *Madame la Duchesse is right.*

There are many English here, but as I read very much, I mix little with them. Our ambassador has just now obliged me extremely. Young Vernon has had a disagreeable rencontre with a French officer. My intimacy with the family has made me exert all my interest to accomodate the affair, which is exactly related in the English papers, and therefore, I shall not repeat it. Vernon has paid several hundred pounds for his folly, as many of his countrymen have done before him.

Two English ladies are now at this hotel, waiting for an aunt, Lady Something, to join them on their return to England; also Miss Mellish of Ellisborough-Hall, and an aunt of the same name. The niece

will be a rich prize—threescore thousand, and a peerage in fee, at the death of the aunt. She is very pretty, but seems too conscious of it to please me. She cannot take off her glove, or move her foot, without silently saying: "Look at the roundness of my arm, and the smallness of my ankle." Till I knew you, I was unacquainted with the disgust which this consciousness of beauty creates; but, when I see the most finished work in the creation insensible to the wonderful elegance and harmony of her limbs and features, I cannot help feeling contempt for any other that comes and says in that dumb language: "You must admire me." Positively, I will not be dragooned into admiration of these *self*-admirers.

The old Duke d'Aspremont is just arrived with his seducing Italian. I have this information from Marmontel, who has interrupted my conversation with my *life*—my *light*—my food—in *one* word, my *divine* Julia. I was provoked. At length, I was barbarian enough to yawn, though

I tried to conceal it. "Ah!" said he, "See the difference; the absence of pleasure is pain to you young men—the absence of pain is pleasure to age. I have this instant left two of your countrymen; one was sitting half asleep upon a sopha, twirling a pack-thread round his fingers; the other was wholly buried in the 'Philosophical Transactions.' For fear I should catch the infection from the one or the other, I called upon Count La Marche. His lady had dressed up her children with flowers, feathers and ribands, in the most fanciful manner imaginable, and they were rehearsing their parts in 'Annète et Lubin,' while their fond parents were all extacy. I asked myself which nation was devoting its hours to the best purpose. I say, Take all your philosophy, and leave us our gaieté." *I caught the infection* from my visitor—He is so lively, so animated, that I mean to return his visit to-morrow.

I have bought myself the most beautiful Roan horse I ever beheld, and one for my groom, little inferior to it. A more

spirited little devil you never saw, but you know I pique myself on my horsemanship; and this has gained me such great fame, that Count de Frere always contrives to join me in my morning rides, in order, as he says, to improve himself, and the door of my hotel is crouded with penny-pye-men, hair-dressers, and shoe-blacks, whenever *Milord Anglais* is *visible.*

I am charmed at what you say of your drawing. I really am a judge, and without compliment, can scarcely suppose it possible for you to improve. When you assure me that while a child you had no particular turn for this art, it shows what wonders can be atchieved by *application,* Enforce this to Fanny. Application will conquer every thing. The abundance of your genius will not be thrown away upon an *insensible.* Life to me would be very insipid without these intellectual (if I may so call them) resources. The pencil pourtrays what is treasured up in the mind, as, in music, the fingers give sound to the harmony confined within the instrument. My

musical powers will surprise you at my return. I already *hear* the concert, in which Fanny, you and I will be the only performers. Ah! when will that moment arrive?

When I take up my pen to write to the charmer of my soul, I run on, without considering that I have as yet said *nothing*. I had best not attempt to express my love, my regard, my esteem, my affection. Words were insufficient to convey the smallest idea of that attachment which my soul is cherishing for the most amiable object on earth. O most adored Julia! Were that most impossible of all impossible things to happen—that you could be forgetful of your vows, what would be my fate? But why do I get into such an unnatural thought! I wish the Mellishes were farther—they are coming to molest me—they take me from you. Adieu, most dear, most beloved; ever unalterably yours

FRANCIS BANMORE.

LETTER XXV.

Julia St. Helen to Lady Jane Forester.

I DO not know what possessed me yesterday, when I attempted to copy that dangerous letter; it has made me quite ill through the night, and to-day I feel myself unable to resume my narrative. Yet, I cannot let it pass without expressing my grateful thanks for your kind letter, and tender invitation to be an eye-witness of your happiness on the 6th of July. Indeed I trust I shall then be able to leave this poor good creature, as I should feel the most sincere joy at seeing you bestow your hand on so worthy and amiable a man as the General. Pray, make my best acknowledgements to him for his delicacy, in supposing a ceremony of this kind might be rendered painful to me through a recollection of the past. How unworthy should I be of the blessings I experience in hav-

ing *such* friends, did I indulge in a retrospect of my own sorrows on such a day!—from gleams of reflected happiness alone must I hope to be lighted on my way. Yes, my excellent friend (you see I obey *you*, as well as *myself*, by using the endearing term) I *will* know only joy—I will beseech the Giver of all good to bless you both in the largest extent of the word.

And now, what can I say in return for your liberal offers? To tell you that I am grateful, is only repeating what you already know. I will not do either the General or your Ladyship, so cruel an injustice, as to doubt the sincerity of your invitation—I am so intimately acquainted with your heart, that I want no new assurances of your affection. You ask me to be your sister in point of equality—to resume my hereditary name and consequence, and to make myself amends for the cruelties fortune has inflicted upon me. Ah Madam! can so weary a child of sorrow, so heart-broken a creature, add to your felicity?

No, give up the fallacious idea; for, at such a time, I fear *you* would imbibe *my* sadness—not *I your* mirth. But you declare you will not be refused. Why then, my loved friend, I come—but I do not promise to continue with you above six months. In that time, I shall be able to judge whether my spirits are beneficial or injurious to yours. Another reason for not engaging myself for a longer term is, that the two five hundred pounds I have already received convince me that my uncle, Sir William, is living. Should he ever return, I would, by the example you now set me, try to heal a broken heart, and from inclination, as well as promise, devote myself to cheering the many heavy hours this repentant being must experience: but, till that event takes place, or in case my uncle should be married again, I will consider the house of my friend as my natural home, since she makes my refusal a deduction from her happiness.

How can you so unjustly condemn yourself, for ordering me out of Lady Charlotte

Egremont's house? "That unfortunate night," do you say? No; Julia St. Helen will for ever call it fortunate. Indeed, my dear friend, had I been in your place, I would have done exactly the same. Even, had you thought me innocent, you must have acted as you did at the moment, and left me to vindicate myself as I could. So many thanks are indeed due to you for your favors, that I forgot to add them in my last for your valuable parcel; I believe I shall be almost as fine as the bride. The General, I doubt not, thinks his beauti- present of blond-point faultless. Pray, correct this error, and tell him there is *one* very great fault, which, even I who profit by it, cannot overlook—*it is too costly.* It obliges me to drink new-milk, to ride out double in the morning, and to pay great attention to my health, that I may set it off to the best advantage.

I have had a very charming letter from your sister and her caro sposo; they make more atonement than the thing deserves. She says her little one thrives astonishingly,

and she begs to present it to her esteemed *friend* Julia. I see she is not acquainted as yet with your goodness to me, as she makes no mention of the prospect of our meeting. The General's sister, whose kindness must ever be remembered by me, is worthy of such a brother. I trust *Miss* Julia will acquit herself properly in the capacity of bridemaid. How like yourself have you behaved on the articles of jewels and settlement! For myself, I can truly say that the *first* were never coveted by me, and as to the *second*, I had determined to decline it, as a proof of the unbounded confidence I had in Sir Francis's honor—Alas! he knew not the *disinterestedness* of this heart—nor can he ever know—But, to return to Lady Clanville, not to my narrative, for I absolutely dismiss *that* for the day.

The evening after our ball and supper, and Lady Clanville's unprovoked humiliations, I got a letter, which I send for your amusement. It was written by Lord Pemberton in such a moment of fun, that

I could not for my life be angry at him for its contents, though I chid him with a "Fy upon you!" when we met.

I was just in the act of enclosing the nonsensical letter, when nurse by accident spilt the ink entirely over it; but as I am determined not to grow serious, I will sooner copy it, than *think*.

"I trust I shall be forgiven, my dear Madam, for my presumption in addressing a cover to you, as soon as I tell you my motive for taking this liberty, which is really to make you enjoy the fun we have had this morning at the expence of Lady Clanville, whose illiberal behaviour last Night disgusted every one of the company. Never was there more *inimitable* fun carried on for upwards of an hour, during which Sir Archy, and your humble servant, sustained their parts most *exquisitely*. I know I cannot do it justice, nor will writing admit of it, because the looks, gestures and tone of voice cannot be represented. "Friend Howard's genius," must fancy the rest. We are so certain that the *charmer* we

visited will not relate our conversation, that we have agreed to risk your displeasure by writing it. I doubt this is the first letter so fair a nymph ever received from a young man, *sensible* of her merit, that had an old woman for its subject, or that avowed, as it now does, that its writer went to Sir Francis Banmore's, because he *knew* the fair-one was *absent*. The whim took Sir Archy and me, when we met you and Miss Banmore in the carriage, to go and tease her for her malice last night. I may venture to predict that I *never* shall love an old woman again. When we got nigh the house, we saw she was dressing in the room over the door. The window was open, and we spoke loud, on purpose that every syllable might meet her ear. I began with "Is Miss Julia at home?"

—"No, My Lord; she is out in the carriage."

—"How cursedly provoking, Sir Archy! Is Lady Clanville, or Miss Banmore at home? We shall get intelligence of our divinity some how or other." (Her Lady-

ship's elbow was visible at the window, for she was in the act of listening.)

—"Lady Clanville is dressing, My Lord."

—"Well then, let her Ladyship know that we are come *purposely* to pay our respects to *her*. Beg her not to hurry her dress, as we will take a turn in the garden, till she is ready." We dreaded an excuse, as we knew she heard all, and therefore, guarded against it. After a full hour, she entered the little green room, and as we stood just under the window, we found by the talk that the operation of tying on bracelets, scenting her handkerchief, and changing her shoes, was going forward. I kept my laugh within bounds, but Sir Archy was obliged to desert his post half a dozen times, to avoid detection; never did man laugh so immoderately.

"Who," said she to her servant, "is this Sir Archibald Douglas? Has he any estate in this county?" "No," answered her Abigail.—"Is he married?"—"No, My Lady."—"Where is he on a visit?"—

"I cannot tell, My Lady."—"Was he ever here before?" "I don't know, My Lady."—"What is his fortune?"—"Why, My Lady, I can't hear of his having a sixpence in any place, though he keeps a fine carriage and gives the best wages, as the butler here tells me. I got up early this morning, to walk over to Lord Lorraine's housekeeper, and learn some little items about him. She was out, but I shall tramp again to-morrow, for I never am easy till I know how folks come by their means." "When you *know*, Allan, give your intelligence to *me*, I never encourage fortune-hunters; Fanny, or myself, may be the object of his pursuits." Out she walked, and presently sent a servant to say she was in the drawing-room. She really looked so *majestic*, that I should have foregone my purpose, had not Sir Archibald had a whet to his appetite by hearing the above conversation.

"How is your Ladyship? I fear we trespassed upon your patience last night, after the fatigue of your journey."

—"No; you all retired in very good time indeed, My Lord."

—"Well, I am very glad you think so, for we all take great merit to ourselves in retiring at all, till we were ordered out. When this fair Julia is present, it requires some fortitude to move an adjournment."

"Dear Lady Clanville," said Sir Archy, with a look of the most anxious enquiry, "is that divine creature within?"

—"Upon my honor, Sir Archibald, I cannot tell, I am totally unacquainted with the occupations of my brother's *household.*"

I threw a blank look into my phiz. "Then your Ladyship knows not where Miss Banmore is? Perhaps her fair friend may be with her."

—"Miss Banmore is out, Gentlemen; I humbly apprehend her *attendant* is with her."

"This is the first time your Ladyship has seen our new constellation. I saw the quick impression her person made upon you, as a stranger," said Sir Archy.

" Her person," said I, " and her manners."

—" And her voice—Lord Pemberton."

—" Yes, true, her voice, her motion in dancing—her irresistible ease and elegance —by heaven, she is too alluring."

—" She endeavours to be so, Gentlemen; 'tis pity if she do not succeed."

" Can age, or apathy," said Douglas, " behold her and not be charmed? Impossible!—she was born to enslave mankind; but her unconquerable coldness . . ."

—" Nay, Sir Archibald, do, pray, be silent on *that* head; any thing else—but keep within the bounds of probability, I beseech you."

—" Upon my soul, her modesty would charm the frozen heart of an anchorite to rapture—don't you think so, Sir Archibald? She is the *ne plus ultra* of all perfection."

—" I wish to God, My Lord, I could see some of those wonderful charms, which, begging both your pardons, you are so perfectly ridiculous about. I hate any

thing that can be construed into envy, a vice I detest; but, upon my honor, her extraordinary merits are only phantoms of your brain—the girl is well enough."

"Your Ladyship surprises me. I never before knew one *handsome* woman unjust to the beauty of another. My Lord, is it not quite a phenomenon?—And yet, I dare say, your Ladyship possessed the admiration of the *beaux* of your days, as unlimitedly as the angel we are speaking of."

—"I *must* interrupt you, Sir Archibald; the comparison would be rather invidious."

—"Upon my honor, Sir Archy, I perfectly agree with her Ladyship—the comparison would be rather invidious."

—"There is, My Lord, you will allow, an infinite difference between a person born and educated, as I may say, in Courts, and a poor creature whom nobody knows."

—"Infinite difference, as your Ladyship very justly observes."

—"What you both say is just—I acknowledge the difference to be *infinite*—

Has your Ladyship heard from Sir Francis lately?"

—"A few days ago, Sir Archibald—very good news, indeed; his health and spirits are both amended, though he does not as yet speak of returning."

—"In my opinion, Sir Francis is right to keep out of the way of temptation."

—"I doubt not that temptation would be thrown in his way; but this *entre nous*. I cannot think the having but one subject of conversation does honor to our taste."

—"There is so much *taste* in that *one* subject that it naturally leads one to talk of it!"

—"Had I a monarch's wealth to give!"

—"And she a heart to yield! O heavens!"

—"I protest you make me laugh. Sir Archibald, you are just come from town; any new publications?"

—"Yes, My Lady; some pretty things; a novel or two, much cried up; I have not read them; but shall when I have leisure—Does Miss Julia the Fair read much?"

—"Upon my word, I do *not* know what Miss Julia *Nobody* does. I really have not the *superlative honor* of being in her confidence."

—"Beautiful drawings these—are they your Ladyship's?"

—"No, My Lord; I fancy they are Fanny's."

—"Do, Sir Archy, come hither; they are uncommonly fine—Indian ink and bistre—I am charmed with that little clump of trees—what delicacy! the moonshine on the water through that brake.. *Julia S. H. delineavit*—is this possible?"

—"And probable too, that she should have placed her name to my niece's performance, for such I am convinced it is. She *teaches* the child. But here comes the carriage; so, if you are very anxious to have your doubts resolved, my niece can satisfy you. Fanny is all innocence, and will never claim any merit she does not possess."

Making my bow, I stammered out: "Oh! I would not be seen just now by the charmer

for millions. Dear Lady Clanville, do, aid me to make my escape! I am half distracted with thinking of her, and must compose myself before I enter her presence." Off we both came together, leaving her Ladyship to bless her stars, that we could no longer annoy her. To-morrow, we propose apologizing for our present impertinence, in troubling you with our moments of folly. My lips affirmed last night that I took a pleasure in plaguing her, and I now ratify the same under my sign manual.

PEMBERTON."

I send this ridiculous farrago of nonsense, only to convince you that I am not lazy, or in my *vile* low spirits. To-morrow, I shall set to work with avidity—till then, adieu, and do me the justice to believe that there exists not a person who *can* be with more real affection, your faithful and obliged friend, than

JULIA ST. HELEN.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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